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Philip French: Chandler John Mortimer: Anna
Science Fiction Reviewed by J. G. Ballard

A Festival of Brotherhood

The net is being spread in the sight of the bird. Even as the delegates assembled for the TUC's loyalty jamboree in Central Hall, Westminster, there came the news of a rapid deterioration in the balance of payments and a consequent slide in the value of the currency. Talk of 'over-valuation' by the Government and its supporters does not seem to have tempted speculators into sampling the obvious bargain that is implied by the term. And, as a result, everybody in the country is approximately £2 per week poorer. No amount of moral blackmail about 'unpatriotic' statements – surely an incongruous line for a Labour front bench to take at the best of times – can obscure this fact. Nor can the Chancellor deny that the target figure for reduced inflation is now unlikely to be met. The massive majority for the 4½-per-cent pay limit, and the statesmanlike conversions of Mr Jones and Mr Scanlon, can therefore be taken at best as confessions of bankruptcy when it comes to alternatives. The louder they shout about rocking the boat, the clearer becomes the note of desperation in their voices. And for the first time in many years Labour's Parliamentary Left has no direct or close relationship with any substantial trade union leadership. The separation of economics from politics is complete at the level of dissent; its unity is absolute at the level of orthodoxy. 'One Way Only' is now the slogan of officialdom in the movement.

The Conservatives of course, and a majority of the press, invert the proposition exactly. They persist in maintaining that the country is governed by the great guilds of Congress House, and that Mr Healey and Mr Callaghan are mere putty in the hands of the General Council. The conventional phrase 'nothing further from the truth' is inadequate to describe this misrepresentation. The TUC is taking on the task of restraining its increasingly straitened membership, on the basis of a prospectus whose main promises and forecasts are looking less reliable with every day that passes.

The fact that there has been no major industrial dispute since Labour returned to power has done nothing to appease those who believe that all responsibility for inflation rests with trade unions. Many trade unionists believed, and believe, this to be true – hence their unparalleled acquiescence today. But if they give up family holidays, and the better cuts of meat, and then find that the whole exercise has been fruitless is it unreasonable to expect that there will be serious disillusionment and unrest?

So much for the immediate gamble being taken by the Government. There is, however, a much more serious criticism to be made of their strategy, and of the effort of will which sustains it. However adroitly ministers produce fresh loans and combinations of loans from their back pockets, and however they succeed in bamboozling the demoralised Opposition benches with these flourishes, they cannot pretend either that the last approach for a stand-by credit met with universal enthusiasm among the world's bankers, or that the pressures which have produced the recent devaluation will not return to inflict another one, and yet another. They are, in the deepest sense of the word, living on borrowed time. And among the borrowed resources is that elusive commodity – the confidence of the trade unions.

'Setting our house in order' for the International Monetary Fund may mean taking measures of modernisation and investment which ought in any case to have been taken long ago. There is no real objection to be made to that, though it would be nice if Mr Healey were a little more specific about what criteria are envisaged. 'Paying our way' is far too woolly and home-spun a term to meet the case. But in return for their concessions on unemployment, on equal pay, on wage levels and on price control, the industrial work force is entitled to be able to detect a difference between the two parties when it comes to policy. So far, all the major promises on redistribution, on planning agreements, and on regional policy have been consigned to another day. If that day recedes indefinitely, Wednesday's minority at Congress may not be a minority for very long.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

Chinese Circus Revue of Taiwan

The price of freedom is eternal vigilance, as you know, but what is the price of eternal vigilance? Margaret Thatcher is very hot on freedom. She's not nearly so hot on eternal vigilance. It's all very well to cry havoc and let loose the dogs of war – well, actually it's not all very well. There have recently been several evenings when there has been no duty minister in Northern Ireland, because the Tories have refused to consider giving him a pair. If Thatcher is prepared to go to those sort of lengths, then she and her Chief Whip ought at least to make sure that they fight hard every inch of the way.

On Monday the Tories were actually offered an emergency debate, on the reasonable condition that there were 40 of them in the chamber. But there were not 40 men to be had. They were all elsewhere, lingering over lunch, or doing those things they do on Capitol Hill, with yielding research assistants and ambitious young chaps from Central Office. They were being spanked in St John's Wood, or flicked with clotted cream in Shepherd Market. They were on the job, yes, but not in the sense that is normally meant. And the result of this failure of self-discipline is that Labour is united and in good humour, the tea-room is amicable and doing a roaring trade, and the Liberals can laugh at Thatcher when she accuses them of keeping the Government in office. Thatcher's main task now is to set her own house in order.

This is what the Liberals are doing. Last Saturday I happened to be passing the Palace Theatre in Manchester. It was advertising 'The Chinese Circus Revue of Taiwan', but the bill-boards turned out to be slightly inaccurate. Inside, the Liberals were picking their way through an agenda of Taiwanese complexity, and arriving at their new method of electing a leader. It was, everybody agreed, a very pleasant occasion. Nice to see Jeremy Thorpe again, for instance, even though he does look a bit like a speeded-up film – darting around his friends dealing out kung-fu handshakes to the men and embraces to the women. He moved around with such swiftness and verve that I began to wonder whether he might not get the two actions muddled up, shake hands with Laura and throw his arms around Jo's neck. Like Dr Spooner coming down to breakfast, when he kissed his egg and hit his wife over the head with a teaspoon.

For Grimond it was a chance to sparkle – and sparkle he jolly well did. You hardly noticed that the politics he was talking were nugatory – amounting to little more than a fair deal for eccentrics. He referred at one point to the enormous potential strength of the do-it-yourself movement as an example of the sort of support Liberals must go for. One imagined hordes of trained cadres advancing on Whitehall, with the bits fixed in their Black-and-Deckers, slogans of 'Back to the Allotments', the ushering-in of the Grout Society. Grimond believes, fervently believes, that British Home Stores does more for England than the nationalised industries. And yet he's also against big business. His ideal world would appear to be a confederation of independent Sainsburys, where everyone had enough to spend. A nice idea.

He urged the Liberals to get through the business of the day, because if they failed to do so, they would look right Charlies. He would have liked to hold the thing as a beauty contest, he said, with the candidates parading up and down. Unfortunately Emlyn Hooson had dropped out, he added, so they wouldn't have a chance to see 'Miss Wales'. The conference went smoothly through all the amendments, which were ably explained by the chairman. 'If you pass Eton and Slough as amended,' he said, 'you automatically knock out Merton and Wimbledon.' People seemed to understand. At the end of the afternoon Margaret Wingfield was thanking everybody who organised the event, and 'particularly one person,' she wound up, 'without whom none of today's proceedings would have been possible . . . ' 'Norman Scott,' said John Pardoe under his breath.

And so to the candidates. Russell Johnston failed to get any nominations. At the last moment, Pardoe suggested that he, David Steel and Thorpe should give the man a chance. This suggestion irritated Steel, since he knew perfectly well that Pardoe's men (Richard Wainwright and Cyril Smith) are absolutely opposed to Johnston leading the party. Furthermore, since the suggestion was made at the last moment, it was made either insincerely or out of a slight sense of panic on Pardoe's part, at the thought of fighting against Steel alone. Steel also thought that he and Pardoe would look a bit ridiculous supporting a rival candidate – it would be 'carrying boy-scoutism a bit too far'. So much for Russell Johnston.

Pardoe. Pardoe puts himself forward as the nasty candidate, whereas in fact he's really quite nice. It's impossible to feel, after talking to him for a short period, that you don't already know him quite well. He's a bit of an ass. In the House of Commons he leaps into the fray, thrashes around, gets a large number of unsolicited laughs, and does his best to show what an enormous amount of energy he has at his disposal. His language is hectic. Listen to this (from the *Radical Bulletin*):

> Most of the Social Democrats in the Parliamentary Labour Party are a busted flush. They have stood with their backs to the wall for so long they are incapable of standing on their own feet without artificial means of support. They are the great soft underbelly of the Labour Party. I doubt if they will ever have the guts to split from the present Labour Party, and even if they joined us they would weaken the Liberal backbone.

It's like a painting by Bosch – a busted flush of a great soft underbelly standing on artificial support with its back against a wall not having the guts to weaken a backbone. It's a nightmare.

But then so, perhaps, is the Parliamentary Labour Party. David Steel, who is depicted as the nice candidate, is not as nice as he seems – if nice implies that butter wouldn't melt in his mouth. *Radical Bulletin* supports him although he 'can be rather remote, somewhat arrogant, and may not behave like a cross between Mussolini and Billy Graham (i.e. he is a bit "quiet")'. Quiet he may be, but that quietness conceals two great strengths: he believes for a start that the Liberal Party is in a strong position, and that it would be stupid to panic into a change of direction; secondly, he believes that he is going to win. I did not ask him at first whether he was confident of victory, it simply emerged from the odd Freudian slip in the conversation. As for that much-canvassed disadvantage of Steel's, that he looks too young for the job, he seems perfectly unworried about it.

The Pardoe style, when he is addressing the Liberals, relies on an appeal to seize the time. Do you really seriously want power? he asks, because if you do, I know how to hand it over. However, when you look at the offer Pardoe makes, it boils down to very little more than the offer of hard work. His phrases, such as the one to the effect that the Liberals must become the vehicle of constitutional reform, have nothing exclusively Pardovian about them. The distinctive feature is personal – you can only do it with *me*. Whereas Steel, in order to provide contrast, talks more generally about Liberal policy, long-term planning and aims. The contest is between the man who really desperately *wants* the job (and wanting a job like the leadership of the Liberal Party is a strong qualification for getting it) and the man who knows that he is the natural heir to the throne. Predictions are always unwise where the Liberals are concerned. My advice to them is – may the younger man win.

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Chris Mullin*

Report from Rhodesia

> Let us suppose for a moment that the African is our mental, intellectual and moral equal, that three generations of contact has given him a belief in the moral Christian imperatives of our civilisation. The assumption is ludicrous of course, but let us make it. Let us further suppose that his moral right to reap where he has not sowed were undoubted. It would still remain for us to ask ourselves whether it is in our interests, as whites, to give him a share greater than he has today in what we have created. Manifestly it would not be.

The above in plain language contains all that most white Rhodesians feel about their situation. It is taken from last month's edition of the extreme right-wing Salisbury journal, *Property & Finance* (which claims a readership of 71,000 and has very little to do with either property or finance). While many whites would disclaim having anything to do with this publication, it reflects, shorn of all the nonsense about 'separate development', very much the average Rhodesian settler's view of his own world.

As far as the whites are concerned, they simply do not believe they have a case to answer. They have convinced themselves of the existence of a general communist plot and they are genuinely surprised that the rest of the world (including, now, Dr Kissinger) is too blind to see things that way. Worse than that, even in their own terms, they show absolutely no signs of being ready to accept that by flatly refusing to negotiate seriously even with the most undemanding African Nationalists they are playing straight into the hands of the men with the guns. By declining to acknowledge that they are fighting anything other than what the Defence Minister, Mr Van der Byl, calls 'communist terrorist criminals' the whites are able to avoid addressing themselves to the central issue, which is how to share out the prosperity and resources of Rhodesia for the benefit of all her citizens.

In fact the only significant white opposition to Smith comes from the Right wing of his own party, who regard him as a pinko and a sell-out for even having talked to the Nationalists – and who will certainly have found their suspicions confirmed by his apparent endorsement this week of at least some of the Commission of Inquiry's proposals for easing 'party apartheid'. In Rhodesian politics there is a tradition for prime ministers to be deposed as a result of an internal coup on the grounds that the leader is going soft on the natives. This is the fate that overtook Garfield Todd 20 years ago; right-wing defections caused the downfall of Todd's successor, Sir Edgar Whitehead, in 1962 and two years later Ian Smith replaced Winston Field for much the same reason. Now Smith finds himself in the same trap as his predecessors. All his political instincts tell him he must negotiate seriously and make some concessions at least in the field of discrimination; but he knows that to do so risks incurring the wrath of his own Right wing.

The only white pressure for reform comes from a small group of liberals probably best represented by the Roman Catholic Justice and Peace Commission – an organisation which has done much to publicise the plight of the rural Africans. Politically, however, these whites are a tiny minority and they are now giving up in despair and leaving the country in droves. One Rhodesian-born white school-teacher and his wife who are in the process of emigrating told me that on looking through their address book they discovered that more than half their friends had either left or were planning to leave.

Perhaps the strongest argument the whites can make in favour of preserving their regime (indeed the only one with any shade

** Chris Mullin recently returned from Rhodesia where he was working on a report for the International Sub-committee of the Labour Party.*

'Mr Plod jerked Mr Monkey out of the car and took him by the arm. Big Ears took him by the other arm and Noddy followed, holding his tail. Aha! Mr Marvel Monkey was well and truly caught!' – Do Look Out, Noddy! by ENID BLYTON

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of credibility) is that a black takeover would lead to civil war, not between white and black, but between the different black factions. And sadly, as things stand at the moment, there is at least some evidence to support this prediction.

The history of African nationalism in Rhodesia is, to say the least, complicated. The longest running of the present nationalist movements is Zapu (the Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union), whose president is Joshua Nkomo. It was founded in 1961. Less than two years later a breakaway group set up Zanu (Zimbabwe African National Union) under the leadership of the Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole. In 1971 a third movement, Frolizi (Front for the Liberation of Zimbabwe) was formed by defectors from both Zanu and Zapu led by James Chikerema, who had been acting president of Zapu during Nkomo's long detention. Ostensibly these splits were the result of political differences, but in reality they had more to do with personalities.

In December 1974 all these factions agreed to come together under the leadership of the African National Council – a body set up under the chairmanship of Bishop Abel Muzorewa which mobilised African opinion against the attempt by the Tories to settle with Smith. The ANC was recognised by the Organisation of African Unity as the only Rhodesian liberation movement. Within less than a year, however, the old Zanu/Zapu differences began to reassert themselves. The final split came last autumn when Nkomo decided to give negotiations another try while the Bishop went into self-imposed exile to lend at least his verbal support to armed struggle.

I was able to talk with representatives of both the ANC and Zapu inside Rhodesia and also in Lusaka and Dar Es Salaam. It's a depressing business. First, because some of them appear preoccupied with the minutiae of their internal disagreements. Secondly, because it was not possible to elicit from any of them any clues as to the political programme they would pursue once Zimbabwe was liberated; this is quite clearly a subject on which they don't seem to have done much thinking in spite of their 13 years (in the case of Zanu) and 15 years (Zapu) of political existence.

None of them could offer me copies of any kind of political manifesto. A Zapu representative in Lusaka, Mr Selendika, said only: 'We want the establishment of a government which derives its authority from the popular will of the people.. In Salisbury the secretary-general of the ANC, Mr Gordon Chavunduka, referred vaguely to 'creating equal opportunities in all areas'.

Both factions claim strong links with the guerrillas, but none of their leaders appears even to have visited the camps. No one whom I spoke to among the Nationalists displayed even a passing acquaintance with the organisation of guerrilla war. Yet both factions advanced the claim that the guerrilla high command was just another arm of their movement. All the evidence suggests, however, that the guerrillas reject this lowly interpretation of their role. At the end of last year they set up a command structure of their own comprising 18 men who, notionally at least, are equally divided between Zanu and Zapu. All the signs are that these men are now running the guerrilla war without any reference to the political leadership of whose divisive antics they are openly contemptuous.

But on its record so far the guerrilla movement itself is by no means free of factional strife. In April this year an OAU report revealed that more than 400 guerrillas had been massacred by their own comrades following a rebellion in a training camp in north west Mozambique. The most ominous aspect of the affair is that the killings took place along tribal lines, virtually all the victims being members of the Shona sub-group, the Kanyike, and the killers being members of another Shona sub-group, the Naranga. Some of those responsible for the murders are now held in Zambian jails, but according to one very well informed observer others appear to be members of the new high command.

None of this augurs well for the future of Rhodesia. The civilian Nationalist politicians are fast becoming irrelevant. There can be little doubt now that the only way to majority rule lies through armed struggle. It is also possible to state with certainty that, if only because of the numerical odds – blacks outnumber whites by 25-1 – the Nationalists will eventually triumph. Yet, given the present military realities, and no outside intervention on either side, the Rhodesian war could drag on for many years. The best hope is that protracted struggle will unite the guerrillas – and that some serious political force will emerge from within their own ranks.

Peter Mansfield

Putting Lebanon Together Again

'The Arab world *needs* Lebanon,' remarked a leading Lebanese Muslim intellectual to me shortly after the 1958 crisis which was the prolonged but relatively peaceful curtain-raiser to the present civil war. The question is whether they need it enough today to ensure its survival: a basic consensus among the Arab countries on this point is essential. One lesson that should have been learnt by now is that no outside power, such as the US, USSR or France, would intervene to preserve Lebanon unless all the parties concerned in the multi-faceted civil war were to agree to ask them in. And in that case there would be no need for intervention.

My Lebanese friend, although a member of one of the leading Sunni political dynasties, was no complacent reactionary. He was fully aware of the darker aspects of Lebanon's social and political system – the cynicism, selfishness and the fatal lack of any sense of national community. But he was referring to its brighter side – its intellectual vitality and precious freedom of expression. Books could be published in Beirut when they could not appear in any other Arab capital. The Lebanese press was by far the most readable and informative in the Arab world. This was not always pleasing to individual Arab governments but there can be no doubt that it benefited the Arab nation as a whole.

President Assad has sent in troops in force, but he has done so with the declared objective of preserving Lebanese independence and not destroying it. There is good reason to believe this is so, even if Syria's host of critics, who include Algeria, Iraq, Egypt and the PLO, claim that Syria's further aim is to bring all the Palestinians who are outside Israel and the occupied territories under her own control, by force if necessary, in order to make Syria a new power-centre capable of negotiating a general Middle East peace settlement with the help of American mediation. President Sadat's apparently opportunist attacks on Syria and his renewed championship of the PLO can be explained by his bitter resentment at Syria's persistent denunciation of him for doing precisely what he believes Syria is trying to do now. The Soviet Union, after embarrassedly refusing to comment on the Syrian intervention for a week, has now joined the critics and risked the most profitable political investment it retains in the Arab world.

The Syrians, admittedly, made several serious miscalculations both about the will and the tactical ability of the Palestinians to resist the advance of the Syrian forces and to prevent the imposition of a *Pax Syriana* on the country. They overestimated the fighting ability of their own Saiqa guerrillas and moreover they were handicapped (fortunately, one might agree) by the knowledge that for them an attempt to destroy the PLO as a military force – as King Hussein and the Jordanian army did in Black September 1970 – would be both physically and politically impossible.

Miscalculations could hardly be avoided in view of the huge range of unknowns in the Lebanese equation – the extent of President Franjiyeh's small-minded obstinacy and ex-President Chamoun's more sophisticated and sinister variety and the deeply entrenched Maronite belief that some outside power – whether the US or France – would launch a Ninth Crusade to save them. On the other side, the Syrians had to cope with the waywardness of Kamal Jumblatt, the feudal socialist (who now says he would welcome a French landing or paratroopers from progressive Arab state), and the bitter distrust of their former Palestinian allies. These are making much of the fact that President Assad's regime is dominated by the Alawite majority, who are allegedly Syrian regionalists and insincere in their support for the Palestinian cause.

From its isolated position Syria can fire one question at the other Arab states which they find difficult, if not impossible, to answer. How do they propose to end the civil war in such a way that preserves

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Lebanon and avoids Israeli intervention? The Arab League force is a fine idea – and it would have been regarded as a chimera only a few weeks ago – but it has already reached an impasse. It cannot establish itself and move into action unless it is invited by Lebanon, and such Lebanese sovereignty as still exists is still personified by the apparently immortal Franjiyeh. The Lebanese Right still prefers the Syrians as peace-keepers, provided they go away after defeating the Palestinians, and if the League force were to arrive and then split up into its component parts the result would be more than disastrous.

As so often happens, especially in the Middle East, immediate practical measures to reduce bloodshed and human suffering may run counter to the ideal solution. In Lebanon this ideal would be a secular state, with an adequate army and police in which all the Christian and Muslim sects were inextricably fused. This would take at least a generation to achieve, even if the Palestinians acquire the state of their own which is a *sine qua non* for stability in Lebanon. Meanwhile, the paramilitary groups are too filled with fear and hatred to lay down their arms and no one can force them to. The first essential is to stop them from shelling each other and then by patient bargaining to restore the shattered fragments of Lebanon in a different shape. The ghetto walls can only come down brick by brick.

The Syrians, who now occupy half the country and show no signs of leaving, will have to play a major role; this would be so even if there were a change of regime in Damascus. Franjiyeh's departure would help in a small way; at least it would enable President Sarkis to pursue his efforts at reconciliation with the Left, who opposed his election. All the Arab states can assist if they accept the complexity of the task of preserving Lebanon. But none of this will work unless the Lebanese rediscover some of their gift for political compromise and abandon hope of forcing the country into the shape that their factions would regard as ideal.

Alexander Cockburn

Sexual Congress

It has not been a good year for Washington. Not only is it the swollen heart of 'big government', lacerated by any sane politician up for election this year: now it has also become Sodom and Gomorrah as well. In the wake of Elizabeth Ray's revelations about her relationship with Wayne Hays the place has become a city of fear. Congressmen and Senators scarcely dare venture out after dark without having their grandmothers along as chaperones. Back home the voters are reading about the noonday rush-hour from Capitol Hill to suburban motels where frisky legislators assuage themselves with secretaries and aides.

And all at the taxpayers' expense: not since Profumo made the mistake of 'telling a lie' in the House of Commons have gossips and deadline moralists been afforded such a splendid excuse for plunging into the sewers. 'Women have complained to us,' wrote Jack Anderson sternly in his syndicated column last Monday 'that representative Bill Gray, a Democrat from Missouri, has accosted them at receptions and in bars. One voluptuous Virginia constituent provided us with detailed tapes of how she was seduced by her senator, Harry Byrd Jr, when she went to him for assistance. Both Gray and Byrd deny any improper advances.'

Then, just as the nation was pondering the misfortunes of the voluptuous Virginian, came news of Congressman Allan Howe's astounding ill luck in Salt Lake City. Howe had been a prominent critic of Wayne Hays's stratagem of fixing up Miss Ray with a $14,000 a year non-job in return for what are invariably described as 'her sexual favours'. (As if anyone in living memory has ever actually asked for such things.) Howe, a Mormon, returned for the weekend to Utah and forthwith accosted two street-walkers demanding, needless to say, 'favours' at $20 a time. The street-walkers turned out to be police decoys, taped him and before the hapless Howe knew what was happening he was pinned against the wall by no fewer than five police cars (this being Utah) and charged with soliciting. Now the state Democratic machine is demanding his resignation from Congress, lest he drag the whole ticket down to disaster next November. Sometimes politicians huddle together. Now they spring apart at the sight of the scarlet letter.

Accusations mount. One Congressman allegedly requests homosexual services from one of his own aides, presumably with the *quid pro quo* of continued employment for the aide. Senator Mike Gravel of Alaska, so one accusation goes, was vouchsafed 'the favours' of Elizabeth Ray, in return for his vote on an appropriation for a new public building in Washington. Carl Albert battles rumours that orgies have taken place in the Speaker's office, and says he will soon resign.

Not so long ago John Ehrlichman, Nixon's henchman, was angrily telling the Senate Watergate Committee that the press habitually covered up the sexual and drinking habits of politicians. Times have changed. Fanne Fox jumped out of Wilbur Mill's car into the Potomac and taxpayers asked how Wilbur could have been spending up to $1,000 an evening in nightclubs. Mills turned out to be an alcoholic. Judith Exner came forward with the story of her twin-track relationship with President Kennedy and the Mafia's Sam Giancana. People now prognosticate the unfolding of Watergate II in another senatorial committee, presumably to be staffed by the halt, the lame and the impotent:

> 'Congressman, did there come a time when you engaged Miss Frou-Frou as a secretary in your office, at $16,000 a year although she has testified she was unable to type?'
>
> 'To the best of my recollection I do not recall . . .'

And so on. For Nixon's tapes, in this sequel, we now have those from Miss Ray's recorder which she prudently placed under her bed, the better to compile the sensational book contracted for some time ago by her publisher. Wayne Hays was not the only person who sought to exploit Miss Ray, just as she did her best to exploit Washington.

It is true that Congressmen and Senators have women on their payrolls who provide sexual services for their friends as well as themselves, and who are used as bargaining tools in advancing legislation. It is also true that thousands of women on Capitol Hill exist in what we may term 'indentured servitude'. Workers in the Senate or House of Representatives are not civil service employees and hence do not have the job protection or other government workers. Unions are banned. Staff are hired and fired at the whim of individual members. The ripe conditions for exploitation are sometimes indicated by the low salaries offered for certain jobs. The applicant, wondering how she can get by on some pittance – and women's pay is markedly lower than men's – finds that a rise is more or less dependent on sleeping with the boss.

It is not as though the publication of Elizabeth Ray's adventures in Washington disclosed startlingly new information. Any seasoned Washington journalist can run fairly efficiently through most Senators and many Congressmen with a charge-sheet of liaisons and predilections. Such information was generally embargoed. But with near unanimity most people had a deep dislike of Wayne Hays, a foul-mouthed bully who controlled such important patronage as the allocation of office space in Congress as well as some Democratic campaign funds. Hays survived a purge of long-term committee chairmen a couple of years ago but this time – with his hand seemingly so clearly detected in the taxpayer's pocket – no one was going to let him off the hook.

Hays has been driven to near suicide and near political ruin as a result. The scandal may force a few other venerable satyrs into premature retirement. A couple of vice rings and call-girl rackets will come to the surface. Bugging artists will be dusting off their equipment and blackmailers will flourish in the land. Congressmen will at least ensure that their girl friends know how to type, and young women entering Congress in search of employment will have Jack Anderson's phone number in their handbags in case of unpalatable emergencies.

No one, at least, can deny that Jimmy Carter is getting all the breaks. The one thing you cannot call the man is a sex fiend. Ronald Reagan, entirely bound up in his wife Nancy, gets a clean bill of health too. Poor Jerry Ford, on the other hand, has lived in Washington for years and has a wife who said she wouldn't mind if her unmarried daughter had an affair. In this bicentennial year that jolly admission may have been a mistake.

New York

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An Open Letter to the Prime Minister

Race and the Inner City

Dear Prime Minister,

Because for the last two years I have made an in-depth study of the problems of our West Indian community I would have written this letter to you irrespective of the events in Southall. These events have highlighted the anguish and problems of our Asian community, particularly the frustrations of the younger generation of Asians. But while the Asian community have immense problems of housing, employment and education, they are problems that are not as grave or as extreme as those currently being suffered by the 120,000 households of West Indian descent.

When I enjoyed the privilege of being Secretary of State for the Environment I was deeply concerned that there were concentrated in a number of our inner-city areas a coloured population suffering from considerable multi-deprivation. A combination of bad housing, bad education and racial prejudice meant that they were destined to be the unemployed and the perpetual poor. The true facts were not available and to obtain the facts was one of the purposes of my instigating the three Inner-City Studies in Liverpool, Birmingham and London – all three in districts with a substantial immigrant population.

Although during my period as Secretary of State for Trade and Industry there was relative full employment it was clear from my observations as the head of that department that our coloured minority were not enjoying anything like the opportunities that were available to the country as a whole. The reality of their bad housing, bad education and high unemployment is of such dimensions that, unless tackled effectively and quickly, it will bring to Britain the crime, the bitterness and the resentfulness that have been such a tragic feature of those American cities that equally failed to identify the aspirations, hopes and deep disappointments of their coloured population. Birmingham and London possess the main concentrations of West Indians. Our first and second biggest cities are therefore threatened unless we succeed in taking effective and imaginative action.

During these two years I have spoken to social workers, clergymen, industrialists, teachers, policemen and West Indians (both young and old) in some of the districts in which the West Indian population is concentrated. I want you to know about the facts of the present situation. A very high proportion of the West Indian population are young children and teenagers. Alas, the proportion of one-parent West Indian families is half as much again as the proportion for our population as a whole. With this background housing is, of course, fundamental.

Housing

I remember the horror with which, within a few weeks of becoming a minister, I talked to one West Indian family – husband, wife and four children – who were living in one room in Brixton without a single window to that room. I was determined to see that such conditions ended. They have not. They are getting worse.

If you are a West Indian there is six times the chance that you will be sharing accommodation with another family than if you are not West Indian. West Indians have two-thirds again more people per room than the population as a whole. The proportion of West Indian families living in what is officially described as overcrowded conditions is tenfold the proportion of the country as a whole.

In London it has been shown that not only have the West Indians obtained about half of the proportion of council houses that their population warrants, but they have also been allocated housing in what tend to be the worst and oldest estates. In the inquiries I have made it is certain that their lack of articulation has resulted in them obtaining but a small proportion of the rent allowances and rent rebates to which they are entitled. Nor are they aware of the statutory rights that are available to them in the sphere of housing. Of all groups in our country there can be none who are suffering from more overcrowded conditions and who are deprived of what we consider to be the basic standards of housing. Of the late teenagers in certain districts I believe there are as many as one in five who could be defined as homeless.

Education

Being concentrated as they are in our worst inner city areas, the majority of West Indian children are in old schools. The turnover of teachers is massive. You will find few teachers in any of the schools in which they are concentrated who have been there for five years. Some of the children have as many as three or four different teachers in one year. A high proportion of West Indian children are leaving school with totally inadequate standards of literacy and numeracy, to the deep disappointment of their parents.

It is not surprising that with the fast turnover of teachers and the fact that 74 per cent of West Indian women of working age are out at work that the truancy rate is of massive proportions and in many cases the teachers are relieved when some of their more difficult pupils are absent. Far too many young West Indians from the age of 12 and 13 onwards are leaving school to join the homeless and the unemployed, living on cash earnings and sometimes on crime.

As yet these increasing groups of unemployed and homeless teenagers have not been mobilised for political or criminal purposes on any scale but if they are the effects could be massive in both London and Birmingham – effects that have only previously been seen in the worst inner-city areas of America.

Unemployment

The 1971 survey showed that of the West Indian unemployed only two-thirds registered. From the inquiries I have recently made in both Birmingham and London I believe this is still the position, particularly among teenagers. The boy who has played truant from school tends not to sign on for unemployment.

From 1974-76 unemployment in Britain doubled, but for the West Indians it nearly quadrupled. In February 1976 there were more than 16,500 West Indians registered as unemployed. I believe in reality there were nearly 25,000 unemployed – one for every five West Indian households, the majority of them teenagers. In some districts you will find nearly half of the West Indian teenagers without a job and those with a job have had to make three times as many applications for a job as their white counterparts of identical educational achievement.

The history of cities has shown that irrespective of being black or white high unemployment among teenagers has always meant a massive increase in crime. You will know as a former Home Secretary how the present crime rate among West Indians has dramatically increased. We are in danger of losing a substantial proportion of a whole generation of young West Indians to prisons, borstals and psychiatric units. We are bound to pay a heavy price if a generation of young people is lost in this way. The reality of the West Indian young is that they are frequently badly educated. They have little motivation; no skills; they are homeless; they are devoid of guidance and more and more devoid of hope. In such conditions they are increasingly becoming positively hostile to the white population and to white authority.

Of 120,000 West Indian households I believe that two-thirds of them are either badly housed or are suffering from unemployment and the majority of them have a much lower standard of literacy and numeracy than the nation as a whole There are probably, therefore, 80,000 West Indian households in urgent need of a change for the better if they are to have anything like the equality of opportunity that the rest of the country enjoys.

We have districts in which in every street there are West Indian families in over crowded and deplorable housing conditions Every other teenager is unemployed or playing truant from school; low incomes and numerous one-parent families: and above all, no hope. This situation must be ended To fail will not just mean the continuation of the misery of large numbers of the coloured population in Britain. To fail will bring increasing misery for the white indigenous population living in our cities For to fail will mean an increase in crime Failure will bring increased burdens on the social services. Failure will mean deteriorating industrial relations. To fail when the task is relatively so small will show a nation incapable of tackling a problem the solutions for which are readily available.

Successive governments, including your own, have operated in Britain general in

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provement areas, the priority neighbourhood schemes, the housing action areas, the educational priority areas, the urban aid programme, the job creation programme, the youth employment scheme and the community industry scheme. And yet I must tell you that the help is not reaching this group of people who need it most. During the operation of all of these schemes their unemployment has increased, their housing conditions have got worse, the crime rate has soared to new heights, and we are making no substantial break-through as far as education is concerned.

It is vital for you to discover immediately why it is that with all of these schemes available so little is being achieved. The Inner City Report on Liverpool has disclosed the startling fact that the district of Liverpool that has double the proportion of immigrants as the city as a whole has 50 per cent more of the larger families, has nearly double the crime rate and treble the overcrowding, is the district that contains 9.6 per cent of the population of Liverpool but receives only 6.1 per cent of the public expenditure of Liverpool.

This is why I urge you, as Prime Minister, to call together your cabinet ministers who have responsibility in these spheres – the Secretary of State for Employment, for Education, for the Social Services, and for the Environment – to demand of them that they first of all ascertain quickly the reality of the dimensions of the problems facing our West Indian community and then to see that, in collaboration with the local authorities primarily concerned, a system of management is put into operation whereby the resources that are meant to be available to these people are made available to them.

There is no doubt that with determination within five years we can by positive action bring an end to the misery of this population and bring them somewhere near to an equality of opportunity with the rest of the nation. It is no use talking of lack of racial discrimination if a lack of positive action means that the worst housing, the worst jobs – or no jobs – tend to be concentrated upon one community.

There is no reason why, with an imaginative five-year programme positively managed, at the end of that five years the housing, educational training and the job opportunity standards for West Indians should not equal those of the rest of the population. Eventually this action will have to be taken. The question is will it be done after racial relations have deteriorated still further, hatred has been built up in the hearts of the West Indian community, hostility has been created by the white community's resentment of the crime and the property damage that will have been attributed to the coloured community? Britain has a size of problem that is manageable. Britain does have the resources to manage it. I plead with you, as Prime Minister, to take the urgent action that is now necessary.

Yours sincerely

PETER WALKER

Christopher Hitchens

Rotherham to the Rescue

'We did lose it for a bit in 1931, but the National Government man went barmy in the end. Or so I've heard.' When Stan Crowther takes his seat as Labour MP for Rotherham on Monday 28 June, putting an end to the political impasse at Westminster, he will be representing the solid reserve strength of industrial Labour. In this South Yorkshire town, feeling is divided between sorrow at the death of Brian O'Malley (whose civic funeral drew substantial crowds into the streets) and irritation at the Tories' parliamentary tactics. Laboriously, Rotherham prepares to do its duty by the Government. There is no fuss about it, and no rush. The window bills go up (under the able direction of Twigg and Aveyard, a famous pair of local organisers), the supporters appear at the Labour Club, the vans tour the streets.

Stan Crowther has twice been mayor of the town, and although his scheme for the new central area has not been universally popular, he is credited with energy and initiative, and with the accolade of being a good local man. Politically he has a left-wing record – though he is now sceptical about joining up with *Tribune*. Most of his rivals for the nomination were right-wing by comparison. But the striking thing is how little this matters. The Labour Party has controlled the council since 1926; half the houses are owned by the local authority; most of the steel plants are in public ownership with strong trade unions. As a neighbouring Labour MP puts it 'these are working people well used to the exercise of responsibility'. Voting Labour is as natural as breathing (and breathing has become somewhat easier since the famous Rotherham atmosphere was cleaned up by order).

The obvious problems are 6.8 per cent unemployed, a new steel bar mill at Thrybergh which has increased output without creating new jobs, the closure of the pits and the poor state of many of the houses. But these are looked upon as difficulties within the Labour consensus. At the recent local elections the party did not lose a single seat, in contrast to surrounding Labour areas. And, given that the Tories have just voted against the clause in the Iron and Steel Bill which allows British Steel to borrow money for investment, it is hard to see them doing much better even among the most disgruntled voters.

But national issues count for very little in this campaign. Labour is the government both locally and nationally; its local representatives have their own style of politics. It is, essentially, Rotherham-centred. Take, for instance, the response to the National Front hooligans who have visited the town and will contest the election. 'They're bloody *outsiders*,' say the locals in the Cat and Cabbage, or any other place of public resort. 'We don't need folk coming in and stirring things up.' Some black eyes were dished out in the town centre last Saturday on this basis (showing the same apolitical decency). It certainly is extraordinary, though, how much fear and apprehension can be generated by a few threatening daubs and posters. Next weekend's Front march, with its cloacal advance publicity, is already the talk of the town, with anxious appeals for everybody to stay at home, and a good community relations record in jeopardy.

It might not be worth dwelling on the activities of the National Front if it wasn't for the fact that when I asked the Tory candidate Douglas Hinckley if he agreed with Labour's condemnation of the march he replied: 'I'm against slanging other candidates . . . you can't help but understand people's feeling about unemployment when they see people coming from overseas . . . of course this isn't a colour question.' Since he had just handed out a statement saying that most Labour leaders had several expensive homes, this seemed rather a wide gulf over which to stretch his chubby form. Hinckley ('Doug', as he has become on his posters) works for private steel, praises Mrs Thatcher loudly and predicts a 22-per-cent swing to his party, which is doubly ludicrous as he needs 36 per cent to win. Why so modest?

On the whole, there is neither enthusiasm nor outrage at the performance of the Government. Local stalwarts tend to distrust the Jenkins-Williams type of Labour leader but have no very strong feelings about, say, the Prime Minister. Public expenditure cuts are the main grievance, and Stan Crowther will not be a friend to the front bench if the process goes any further.

There are very few people in Rotherham who believe, or believe that anybody does believe, that inflation is the cause of unemployment. There has been too much closure of outdated plant in the area to justify any such view. There are no working pits left in the constituency, though some coal miners do live inside the boundary, and the metal trades have been in difficulty for some time. But, again, it is rare for national perspectives to intrude themselves. Attachment to Labour is not an ideological preference, and it does not really ebb and flow with the rhythms of an Oxford or an Orpington. It just endures.

This may seem a very boring point to make about a by-election, but it is, of course, the essence of Callaghanism. The maddeningly stolid, reliable loyalties of ordinary working-class voters are just what he likes and has always counted on. And it looks like continuing. All three of the inhabitants whose 18th birthday is on polling day have declared for Labour in advance. Naturally. The town has a bad turnout record – usually below the national average. But on the day it will be all right. What answer from the North? The whips and the gnomes can relax. Rotherham will stand by the pound.

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Mervyn Jones

Italy: Il Momento è Grave

Italian is an easy as well as a beautiful language, so one soon grasps the sense of the poster widely displayed during the 1976 election campaign by the PCI (Italian Communist Party). It says: '*Il momento è grave – non serve la discordia – occorre l'unità.*' The story of how a communist party comes to be making such an appeal has a significance not confined to Italy, so I felt justified during my recent stay in Italy in giving most of my attention to the ideas and activities of the PCI. But to supply the perspective one must go back 29 years to the onset of the Cold War.

The US Administration had then resolved on a two-pronged effort to check the threat of communism in Europe. The Truman Doctrine was a commitment to send military aid where it was needed (civil war was raging in Greece); the Marshall Plan was a pledge of large-scale economic assistance. American envoys were making it clear that the plan could not be pursued if communists had a share of power in the nations to be thus saved for a form of democracy inseparable from 'free enterprise'. But, since liberation from fascism, there had been communist ministers in the coalition governments of Italy and France. In March 1947, they were brusquely ejected.

The party favoured by the US in Italy was Democrazia Cristiana, which has always tried to represent itself as rather more than a party: as the incarnation, in fact, of Italian civilised traditions and particularly of Catholic faith. The most successful DC leader, Alcide de Gasperi, managed for a time to achieve a type of conservative dominance comparable to the halcyon years of Adenauer in Germany or De Gaulle in France. Italians dressed in stylish clothes and rushed about in little Fiats, tourists flocked to the beaches, hotels and office blocks sprouted in the cities, communism seemed to be an irrelevance.

Even at its best, however, the boom had a hectic and insecure character contrasting with German and French solidity. Its atmosphere was marred by the frantic rush for speculative wealth, the refusal of the rich to pay taxes, widespread corruption in administration and the law, and the repeated social and sexual scandals of the *dolce vita* era. Economists now say that there was excessive concentration on easily made consumer goods, not enough interest in sophisticated industries such as machine-tools or electronics, not enough investment, not enough technological research, and also a serious neglect of agriculture. Especially, there was no real bridging of the gap between the developed north and the backward south, where you may still wander down a dusty road and imagine yourself in a languishing part of the Third World.

Italian capitalists, as well as the multinational companies which moved in on a large scale, were relying on a reservoir of labour drawn from the depopulated south. Assembly-line methods dispensed with skill, productivity was low even when gross production was high, and wages were low too. In the later 1960s, when wages were forced up by trade union action, the response of the multinationals was often to transfer their operations either to Germany, where productivity was better, or else to the Third World, where wages are still minimal. Italy was thus ill-prepared to meet the world recession that began in 1973. With markets contracting, much of industry was abruptly revealed as uncompetitive, and agriculture still more so. Maybe the communists had been right after all, and the DC policy of saying *enrichissez-vous* to the thrusting princes of 'free enterprise' had sown only sour grapes. The workers, in general, had always thought so; now the idea began to occur to thousands of farmers, to small businessmen menaced by bankruptcy, and to educated men with degrees but no jobs.

Inflation, largely caused by expensive imports, has made heavy inroads on purchasing power and is still unchecked; prices have risen 12 per cent in the last four months. The lira has slipped on the exchanges as badly as the pound. Above all, unemployment is tragically high. Over a million workers have been dismissed, while many more – thanks to union agreements – are being paid (as a rule 90 per cent of the basic wage) but doing no work. To be counted as unemployed in Italy, however, you have to lose a job. About 800,000 young people – aged between 14, the minimum school-leaving age, and 29 – are looking for their first job and get no dole or social security money. One estimate is that 3½ million people are looking for work; this figure includes masses of poor peasants thrown off the land who are also outside the social security system.

The province of Milan, mainly an urban conurbation, has a population of nearly 4 million. As you drive along the straight roads of the flat Lombard plain, you keep thinking you've reached the countryside only to find the blocks of flats beginning again, very much as when you drive from Birmingham to Coventry. Milan, indeed, might well share with Birmingham the title of 'city of a thousand trades'. It has the incredible number of 54,000 productive enterprises with an average of 16 workers. When you remember that some of the enterprises are big – Alfa-Romeo cars, Pirelli tyres, three steelworks, several important chemical and pharmaceutical firms – it is clear that some are the meanest sort of workshops. Many of these, making components of components, are now doing a couple of days' work when an order comes in but are idle most of the time. I haven't seen so many men hanging about since my boyhood memories of South Wales. Men at the cafés and *trattorie*, men chatting at street-corners, men lounging under the trees. (Thank God for the hot weather, but Milan can be bitter in winter.) On a British statistical basis, including the young men who have never worked, Milan must have at least 20 and probably 25 per cent unemployment.

Around Milan the greatest prosperity is in the lush countryside, with its large beef or dairy farms. It's very different in the Marche, a region stretching from the Apennine crests to the Adriatic coast and about midway down the Italian peninsula. Here the farms are tiny, averaging 20 acres. The Marche isn't so desperately poor as the deep south but is reckoned to be socially and economically backward; before the unification of Italy it belonged to the Papal states. The traditional system of land tenure is the feudal one known as *mezzadria*. The owner pays a fixed percentage of the equipment and gets a fixed percentage of the produce, which he then markets as best he can. The Church owns 25,000 acres, there are some big absentee landlords, but a good deal of the land belongs to doctors, lawyers and similar middle-class people living in the picturesque small towns. The evils of *mezzadria* are that the owner keeps investment and re-equipment to a minimum (often he can't afford much, and he seldom has any knowledge of farming); that the tenant has no say in what crops to plant; and that, as a rule, the owner gives orders to produce a bit of everything in the hope of making a lucky sale. A typical farm will have wheat, maize, vegetables, fruit trees, vines and half a dozen beef cattle, stall-fed on hay because there is no grazing space. Obviously this penny-packet production can't compete with specialist farms in Lombardy, to say nothing of France or Holland.

The population of the Marche, now 1,300,000, has fallen since the 1961 census by 100,000. There has also been an internal shift as young men leave the land, mostly to become waiters in the seaside resorts. Agriculture still represents 24 per cent of the labour force, but the number of land workers went down from 344,000 in 1961 to 116,000 in 1973. Most strikingly, 62 per cent of peasants are aged over 55. The exodus from the land might not matter, in an economic as distinct from a human sense, if it were accompanied by high output. But output is stagnating – it has risen a mere 2 per cent since 1961 – and in some branches fast declining; notably, this period has seen a 35-per-cent fall in numbers of cattle, at a time when Italy is buying French meat with a weak lira. And over this same period 250,000 acres of useful land have been abandoned and gone to waste. The tenants die, their sons leave, the owners invest their savings in some other way.

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Aside from some shipbuilding on the coast, the main industry of the Marche is shoes. It arrived in the 1960s, flourished in small units, and paid low wages. When strikes forced the entrepreneurs to respect national wage agreements and pay into social security funds according to law, they reacted by closing the factories and getting the shoes made by people working at home. Some quite large Italian shoe firms, whose brand names you might see in Oxford Street, rely entirely on this outwork. The payments (often to uneducated women) are miserable, there is again no bother about social security, and the incentive is to produce fast. Apparently this is why Italian shoes tend to fall apart when you start wearing them.

Generously, the PCI advised me to spend my time in the beautiful hill town of Macerata, which is by no means one of its strongholds. One of its candidates told me that the relatively low communist vote is due to intimidation by employers, who threaten to cut off work if the province goes Red; another ascribed it to religious prejudice and the influence of backward priests. (However, Macerata does have two priests supporting the Christian Movement for Socialism.) The party campaigns for the ending of *mezzadria*, to be replaced either by rent-paying tenancy or by peasant ownership. Such ownership, a comrade stressed to me, would be viable only with cooperative planning and marketing. He explained that some DC politicians, seeing the end of *mezzadria* in sight, have proposed immediate mergers into cooperative farms; and he was very shocked by the idea of skipping the stage of individual ownership. 'Cooperatives enforced by law? That would be Stalinism!' he exclaimed.

Similarly, the communists don't propose the abolition of outwork. People like making shoes in their homes, I was told, but there ought to be decent remuneration and proper inspection of the product. Nor is the introduction of heavy industry the answer to the depopulation of the Marche. Italy has gone too far already toward becoming a nation of industrial conurbations. The small town, the village, the family farm, the viable household – that is the Italy which the communists want to protect.

Both in the Marche and in Milan, I was struck by the care taken by the PCI to stress the Italian-ness (*italianità*, a key word in this country's political vocabulary) of its brand of socialism. I heard one PCI candidate, in a debate with a representative of the extreme Left, say: 'Real revolutionaries seek to change society in accordance with its nature, not with an imposed dogma. Our strength is that we reflect Italian society with its pluralism, its diverse ideologies, and its respect for religion.' One way of proving this has been to include non-communists in the PCI list of candidates. (A constituency elects a number of MPs – 52 for Milan plus Pavia, 16 for the Marche – by PR.) Some of these independent names are low on the PCI list, but others are high up and likely to get in. The most notable is Altiero Spinelli, the retiring EEC Commissioner. They include a good sprinkling of practising Catholics, and much stir has been caused by Cardinal Poma's threat that they will be excommunicated. I rather doubt whether

'Have no fear: we have given our pledge. We do not withdraw, no matter where the pressure comes from or what it is. We shall carry through our reform of industrial relations.'—Rt Hon Edward Heath, MP, at the Conservative Party Conference, 1970.

WHAT SIR DENIS TOLD THE TORIES...

Sir Denis Barnes was the Permanent Secretary at the Department of Employment when the Conservatives won the 1970 general election—and decided to press ahead with their Industrial Relations Bill.

To Sir Denis and his colleagues fell the task not only of preparing the way for the legislation the Tories wanted, but also of alerting them to dangers that lay ahead.

Were any warnings given by the civil servants? And if so, how much attention did the politicians pay to them?

Both questions are answered in a television programme which brings Sir Denis face to face again with two men who were key ministers at the time—Lord Carr (then Mr Robert Carr, Secretary of State for Employment) and Sir Geoffrey Howe, the former Solicitor General. The programme is presented by Christopher Chataway, himself a minister in the Heath government.

THE STATE OF THE NATION: PARTY IN POWER

Conservatives and Industrial Relations

Sunday 20 June 1976 at 12 noon on the ITV network

GRANADA TELEVISION

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this form of clerical muscle-work will be as effective in 1976 as it was a generation ago. The Pope, in a mystifying utterance, stopped short of endorsing Poma's threat, and several bishops are known to disapprove of it.

I was interested, too, in the social origin of communist candidates. One has to bear in mind the Italian tradition that Parliament is a place for educated men; one communist asked me whether the Labour Party ever put forward working-class candidates. In Milan, a leaflet designed for distribution in factories listed the working-class names in the PCI list. The highest were numbers 5, 10, 14, 15 and 17 (if it does well, the PCI will get 20 seats from the constituency). In the Marche, where the PCI hopes to win seven seats, I noted that the top seven candidates were: 1, an economist; 2, the party's national treasurer; 3, a professor of history; 4, a woman teacher; 5, an actress; 6, a former building worker who is now chairman of the Peasant Alliance; 7, a shipyard worker. By the way, the PCI has far more women candidates than any other party.

Plight of Farming

I was able to talk at some length with three communist candidates, all sure of election, who were pretty representative of the range of the party's appeal. Pietro Ingrao, one of the senior national leaders, has been a full-time communist most of his life, had an admirable record in the resistance against fascism, and incarnates what might be called solid party traditions; when he came to speak at Macerata, I saw that he was warmly welcomed by the local comrades. Guido Carandini is the professor who figures at number 3 on the Marche list; he looks very distinguished in an ambassadorial manner, is in fact the son of a former ambassador to London, and told me: 'I come out of the Italian liberal tradition, which is pretty well represented in the modern PCI.' Andrea Margheri is a former journalist, now PCI secretary for the city of Milan. What's interesting about him is that he joined the PCI only in 1972, moving over from a splinter of the Socialist Party. The PCI evidently has no prejudice against comrades of recent membership; Margheri is on the Central Committee, has this key organisational post in Milan, and is now to enter Parliament (much against his personal inclination, incidentally, as he doesn't like Rome).

Some communist meetings. When Ingrao comes to Macerata it's pouring with rain and the meeting in the *piazza* has to be abandoned. But about 600 people pack the largest available hall, pretty good in a town of 44,000 which is far from a communist stronghold. Ingrao is a brilliant and also a humorous speaker, with a style resembling that of Aneurin Bevan. He begins by inviting questions, a regular PCI practice in this election and a great novelty in Italy. A Catholic asks if there will ever be another free election if the communists get their hands of power. Ingrao sounds most indignant when he replies, though I gather later that he's delighted to get the question. He grows very passionate about the PCI's belief in democracy. 'Let's work together for a new dimension of freedom!' he exclaims to ringing applause.

Another evening, I go with Carandini to a meeting for peasants. We turn down a muddy track to a farmyard and are greeted by a man who says the neighbours haven't come yet; they're getting in the hay and working until the light gives out. We admire the eight cattle, kept in a shed that in traditional style forms the lower floor of the house. This peasant has only eight acres. All the land hereabouts is owned by a hospital trust administered by the nearest small town, Loreto. Recently the Loreto council has got a left-wing majority and the *mezzadria* system has been replaced by cash tenancy; our peasant pays £100 a year, but is happy because he can choose his crops. Gradually, a dozen other men arrive – no women. We go into the kitchen and the host serves wine all round. Our meeting finally begins at 10.15 and lasts until nearly midnight.

Carandini, treated with much respect, gives a thoughtful outline of party policy toward agriculture, industry, inflation, honest government. Someone asks: 'Why are we importing meat and even onions? We're working hard but we never see any results.' Carandini replies that the DC government gave in too weakly to EEC restrictions on Italian food production. Then a young peasant, speaking with considerable passion, says that the plight of farming is hopeless, even the PCI doesn't really want to help, it's interested only in the industrial workers. Carandini says that industrial workers have improved their conditions by having strong unions and being united, and peasants must do the same. The workers now realise, he adds, that agriculture must be helped because food imports bought with a weak lira amount to a wage-cut. In the car going back to Macerata he remarks that the young man is right – the party has been late in grasping the importance of agriculture.

Policy of Compromise

What is the PCI really trying to do at this point in Italian history? Everyone has heard by now of Berlinguer's conception of the historic compromise. Essentially it is a truce between the two Italian traditions that have been bitterly opposed since the days of Garibaldi – that of anti-clerical liberalism, developing into Marxism, and that of religious belief. Berlinguer is saying that Italians adhering to both traditions have a common interest in overhauling society; and that, *il momento* being so *grave*, this can be done only if they collaborate.

About this policy, there seem to be three misconceptions. The first is that it's a mere trick and that, once they get into government, the communists will set about ejecting their partners and creating a one-party state like east European communists in Stalin's time. I find this impossible to believe for a number of reasons. Italian communists are better Marxists than Gottwald and Rakosi; they're aware that nothing in the writings of Marx or Engels, or indeed Lenin before 1917, laid down that a one-party state was a feature of socialism. Their own 50-year tradition, from Gramsci through Togliatti to Berlinguer, gives them a heritage of thinking far more original and subtle than the crudities of Moscow. And their experience in regional and city administration has given them confidence in permitting free debate but mostly getting their way all the same, simply by gaining broad support for their policies. Admittedly it's always possible that they could be seized by a sudden lust for power, or could overreact to an external threat, or that the present leaders could be pushed aside by tougher men. But to envisage such risks is not at all the same thing as doubting the sincerity of the course that the PCI is now following.

Campaign of Violence

Secondly, it's said that the idea of the historic compromise is to avert an onslaught like that which, with US connivance, destroyed Chile's socialist government in 1973. I put this to Ingrao, who said that the international aspect of the policy is secondary, while its internal aspect is primary. The purpose, I think, is not to mollify Kissinger so that he refrains from de-stabilisation, but to make Italian society so cohesive that destabilisation wouldn't work. In his speech, Ingrao ascribed the overthrow of Allende – and also Mussolini's victory in 1922 – to a fatal isolation of the working class from possible middle-class allies.

Likewise, the communist pledge that Italy would stay in Nato has a dual intention: internally, to avoid an unnecessary dispute with coalition partners; externally, to avoid antagonising not so much the US as Italy's friends in the EEC. A further observation on this matter came from Signor Spinelli in an interview last week. 'Nobody loves Nato,' he said, 'but the next crisis will surely be in Yugoslavia, and if Italy goes neutral Yugoslavia may suffer the fate of Czechoslovakia.'

However, while on the subject of possible dirty tricks should the PCI enter an Italian government, it is worth noting that quite strenuous efforts have been made to disrupt this election campaign by creating an atmosphere of violence. The murder of a young communist, allegedly by an MSI (fascist) MP – now the subject of extradition proceedings in London – at Sezze Romano was only the start. There was an exchange of shots between fascists and ultra-Leftists in the Piazza Venezia, Rome's equivalent of Trafalgar Square; fascists in speeding cars shot up a PCI office and a restaurant in Rimini; three boys were killed by stumbling on a bomb in a deserted house near Piacenza, which turned out to contain an IRA-style arsenal; and so I could go on, for these three incidents happened on the same day. The ultra-Left Red Brigades have taken responsibility for the murder of the Genoese magistrate, Sig. Coco; but few people believe that they could have brought it off without professional help beyond their own resources. There's evidence that both the Red Brigades and the fascists are infiltrated, guided or assisted by elements in the SID, Italy's CIA. And as for the CIA itself, you can think what you like, and plenty of Italians do. So, to revert to the historic compromise: it would be very silly of the PCI to let anyone think that a resort to violence is a legitimate response

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to communist schemes for dictatorship.

The third misconception is that the PCI has gone 'moderate' in the sense carried by that word in British politics. It is true that Italian communists aren't keen on our Labour Left's programme of nationalising one industry after another, but that's because they don't think that such a programme is any guarantee of a socialist society. A great deal of Italian industry is already state-owned, they point out, and retains productive, employment and wages policies characteristic of capitalism. For the PCI, socialism means that working-class and popular organisations call the tune – in government, in industry, in education, in local affairs. All communist speeches contain emphatic demands for the hegemony of the working class, for its progressive assumption of a dominant and leading role in every kind of decision-making. I suggested to Ingrao provocatively that his party's economic policies might get Italy out of its present mess only to ensure that capitalism was working better. Not at all, he said. The more we get out of the mess, the clearer it will be that we've done so by rejecting capitalist solutions; and the more the working class takes control, the closer we shall be to socialism.

But to be the dominant and leading force, the communists add, doesn't mean being a force that excludes others from participation. On the contrary – successful leadership depends on carrying along the widest possible grouping of businessmen, peasants, professional people and the middle class in general. On the political level, this means carrying along millions of people who have voted DC and aren't ready to stop voting DC, whether for religious or for other reasons. Within the unity, the communists say dialectically, there is a constant struggle. The point is to change the political style and thinking of the DC itself. It has been a party obedient to the narrowest groups of big capitalists, multinationals, big and useless landowners, and intolerant Catholics of the type of Pope Paul VI. It must become, instead, a party that truly reflects the interests of the middle-class, peasant and indeed working-class people who vote for it.

Naturally, there is a vocal critique of the historic compromise from left-wing groups, who are standing in the election under the label of Democrazia Proletaria, and who have a strength worthy of consideration (especially in Milan) among workers and students. I had a talk with Sig. Vittorio Rieser, editor of *Il Quotidiano dei Lavoratori* (the *Workers' Daily*), in which he took the line that the reactionary elements in the DC would know how to dominate a coalition government and frustrate any moves toward real social change – let alone working-class hegemony – so that the PCI would have been wiser to opt for a Left government. I must say that I was impressed by the amicable tone of the polemics between the PCI and DP, considering the acerbity of similar polemics in Britain. Ingrao, for instance, told his Macerata audience that the DP is useful in providing 'signals for the future'. Much of the argument seems to turn on what has been happening since political changes were effected in the regions after last year's elections. Rieser said that nothing much has been achieved, thanks to the PCI's cautiousness in trying to act only with the consent of 'good' DC elements. PCI councillors, however, say that quite a lot has been achieved and much more is possible. In the Marche, to take an example, many DC notables are cooperating with communists and socialists in liquidating the *mezzadria* system.

As I'm writing so close to polling day, it would be pointless for me to attempt a forecast of the result. But, since no single party can possibly have a parliamentary majority, the precise outcome doesn't matter so much as the political shifting of the ground, caused by the sheer incapacity of the DC to govern in the old way. The one safe prediction is that the election will be followed by a month or more of negotiation. It could, if the DC has done very badly, end with the formation of a communist-socialist government. No one I met thought this at all likely; it could scarcely have a majority, the communists don't want it, and DC politicians don't want to give up all the jobs. There may be a government of national unity (everybody except the fascists), which is what the PCI seeks. Or there may be a government without communist ministers, yet with communist agreement on policies. This formula has worked well in some of the regions. The negotiation, Ingrao said to me emphatically, must be about the next government's programme rather than about cabinet posts.

Many factors have converged to incline the PCI to its policy of historic compromise. One, obviously, is Italy's proportional electoral system. Another is the Italian tradition that a party representing a large element in national life has a right to a share in power, even if its vote is only 35 or maybe 25 per cent of the total. It doesn't seem to Italians that the PCI has been in opposition for the last 29 years, but rather that it has been excluded and discriminated against; hence the PCI promise not to discriminate similarly against the DC. But the chief factor is a social analysis which deserves, I think, to be taken very seriously.

The Left in Britain is accustomed to react furiously to words like 'government of national unity', knowing what they mean to Mr Rees-Mogg and Mr Levin. It could

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also be said that we've never laid the ghost of Ramsay MacDonald. There is some value, I believe, in our conception that democracy means a clear-cut choice. However, to be significant the choice should be effective; and it has to be admitted that several Labour governments – twice with impregnable parliamentary majorities – haven't given us socialism. So the Italian communists could be right. The British Left, unthinkable though the suggestion may be to some, could be wrong.

Corinna Adam

The Archbishop's Non-Revival

All self-respecting evangelists love the limelight: Dr Donald Coggan is no exception. Indeed the Archbishop, a man not given in general to revealing his feelings – rather the reverse – positively sparkles when he thinks back, as he has been doing this week, to the heady days of 1975. As soon as he became Archbishop of Canterbury in January, we are told in a new book*, letters began to pour in asking for a National Day of Prayer. Political leaders (the name of Harold Wilson is whispered) asked him for a spiritual lead. And so (with his chaplain Prebendary D. W. Cleverley Ford and the Rev. John Poulton, of the Archbishops' Council on Evangelism, as midwives) the Call to the Nation issued forth on 15 October. Coggan himself became, for the first time, a nationally recognised figure; the troops of the High Church Left were discomfited; Her Majesty approved.

So the gall of the campaign's failure – the cheery handouts from Lambeth Palace notwithstanding – must be all the more bitter. The lights are no longer focused on Dr Coggan. (Not that they ever were, to quite the extent he and his associates like to believe, and which is re-asserted this week with the publication of *Dear Archbishop*, a summary of the 27,000 letters received in answer to the Call.) The revival has not taken place. Of course it is easy to sneer. But what on earth is one to make of a nationwide campaign which cites, as an example of its achievements, 'a new adventure playground in Canterbury', and gives it moreover as the *only* concrete example? Admirable no doubt, but surely a rather minute rabbit for such a large hat?

The Archbishop certainly cannot complain about the extent of the coverage he was given in October; there is an inescapable impression, though, that he and his friends were so dazzled by its scope that they ignored its tone, which ranged from the indifferent to the downright hostile. Take *The Times*. The day after the Call, the journal of record made its ritual obeisance to the Primate of All England (which is to say any major pronouncement rates the splash). But it refrained (pointedly?) from any comment on the speech, although its columns were subsequently used for the inevitable debate about motivation and methods and which should come first, a change in society or a change in the individuals? And even all that provoked scarcely more correspondence than the current abstruse discussion on episcopal appointments. It seemed that Mr Rees-Mogg prefers to editorialise on the state of the nation and the need for a new spirit of goodwill, etc., at times of his own choosing – such as the beginning of the 1975 Holy Year, for instance. This week, the Archbishop's anodyne remarks on the rights of immigrants to a peaceful family life got the same respectful page one treatment – but, again, no comment.

The *Guardian*'s church affairs correspondent, Baden Hickman, remarked in October that Coggan has always regarded Archbishop William Temple as his 'patron saint', and was certainly thinking of Temple's wartime broadcasts when he made the Call. Generally, in line with its Low Church traditions, the *Guardian* treated Coggan most gently. He had been 'brave enough to challenge cynicism . . . [but] some more answers from him would not come amiss . . .' On the Saturday following the Call, the Archbishop wrote meekly in the religious spot at the foot of the leader page, just like any humble clergyman. Of the pops, the *Mirror* was most enthusiastic in a jolly, general kind of way, congratulating the Archbishop on having reminded us all that 'there is a great deal every one of us can do to reinforce the quality of life'. The *Daily Telegraph* (which manages to disapprove of virtually all bishops, one way and the other) was positively hostile. The Call was 'oversimplification'; Christianity 'cannot tell us whether or not, say, the shipbuilding and aircraft industries should be nationalised'. Their readers reacted quite strongly, describing the leader as 'sour' and 'querulous'. A parson in Oxford said he would use the piece as 'ammunition against those of my parishioners who still mistakenly equate the Tory Party with the Church of England!'

It has been, interestingly, the *Morning Star* which has made the running throughout. It began, predictably, with an attack on the capitalist ethic behind the Call – predictably not just given their politics, but their long-standing cosy relationship with Dr Coggan's ideological adversary, Dr Mervyn Stockwood of Southwark, and the group which includes his honorary chaplain, the Rev. Paul Oestreicher (a compulsive letter-writer there), and the vicar of Bethnal Green, Father Kenneth Leech. But relations improved and by 29 May, when the Call was dead mutton as far as Fleet Street was concerned, the Archbishop was writing for the *Star* about the 'Battle for a Healthy Society', producing such wise thoughts as 'Too often breakdown occurs because human relationships are wrong'.

It is indeed hard to pin the Archbishop down to anything much more definite, as witness his (largely unreported) press conference last Monday to launch *Dear Archbishop*. Did the Call involve discussing different political systems? Dr Coggan smiled that slightly taut smile and said there was no area of life in which God wasn't interested. But it was up to us to discuss it. 'This has always been an "over-to-you" operation,' he said, using the catchphrase not for the first nor indeed the last time. Another question. What about Christians fighting one another in Northern Ireland? '*You* say they are Christians.' 'Well, sir, they think of themselves as such.' 'That's quite another matter, isn't it?' replied Dr Coggan, clearly regarding the argument as thereby closed, and merely adding irritably that of course he cared about Ireland, he'd *been* there.

He is a man who needs to be prompted fairly thoroughly to admit pity or sympathy; he wears an air of faint impatience with human frailty. An admonitory vein runs through *Dear Archbishop* (and clearly commended itself to Garth Lean, the unlucky moral re-armer who had to retitle *his* book *Rebirth of a Nation* and postpone its publication for a week, to suit the Archbishop). Early on during Monday's press conference, the Rev. John Poulton remarked with every appearance of beaming approval that 'Discipline got a very good press' – i.e. a lot of the Archbishop's 27,000 correspondents were in favour of more of it. Indeed, and their views are recorded in the book; but we somehow heard less of those who felt that some of Dr Coggan's attitudes (particularly towards people whose family lives were unhappy) were uncharitable, though a couple were in evidence that evening on *Nationwide*. 'Too many marriages break up after a single tiff,' said Dr Coggan. *Really?*

The Archbishop and his clergy have, in fact, produced no evidence of the success of the Call, bar the figure of 27,000 letters (somewhat arbitrarily transformed into some 'two or three million' reacting positively, on the assumption that for every person who wrote, a hundred meant to do so but never got round to it). Nor is there any breakdown by age, sex, occupation: they might just be, as someone at the press conference remarked '27,000 amateur worriers'. But the truth behind the campaign's failure to hold the country's attention for more than a few days is probably not so much that the Call contained unpalatable home truths, but that it is all so very vague. The outcome was virtually predicted by *The Times*'s religious affairs correspondent Clifford Longley in December 1974. He described very succinctly what happens when evangelical leaders (*vide* Dr Billy Graham) forsake the security of scriptural reference and begin to preach the 'social gospel' – i.e. to talk politics. They cannot, for reasons of caution or ignorance or both, be too specific; but by dodging issues they damage their credibility. 'They are on a hiding to nothing, but perhaps that is their vocation,' Mr Longley wrote. He should perhaps be given some kind of award for prescience.

* **Dear Archbishop** by JOHN POULTON *Hodder and Stoughton* 60p

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London Diary

☐ TUC congresses very seldom sparkle, but this year even Clive Jenkins was muffled. The sight of the sea of balding heads, almost all containing made-up minds, reduced him to talking about patriotism and speculation in order to get a clap. In the absence of Len Murray, the platform was dominated by his deputy, Norman Willis, who made a leaden speech of introduction with only two unscripted jokes and, according to one seasoned industrial correspondent, 'fluffed the line I fed him yesterday'. (But journalists were soon to get their come-uppance, with Hugh Scanlon bitterly attacking both them and their union for not supporting the pay policy and thereby 'selling Britain short'.) Cyril Plant of the Inland Revenue Staff Federation was in the chair – the Prime Minister's old union sticking to its own. Calls for selective import controls were made as a matter of course by the platform but they were obviously for decorative purposes only, and those delegates who really want them did not bother to cheer. Outside was a larger than usual group of protesters: mainly young students and out-of-work teachers who kept up a continuous chant of 'No deal with Healey'. The tiny sprinkling of manual workers' banners showed that the real victim of cuts and contraction are unrepresented by any big battalions. Inside it was agreed that Jim Prior is wrong. The best people are not leaving the country. They are staying behind and taking their medicine.

☐ It's just two months since Jack Jones asked his question: 'Cannot the leisured classes in our society learn to play without all the fripperies such as Ascot and the like?' In a sense, I suppose, this past week has given him his answer – not that he'll have found it a very encouraging or reassuring one. In fact, if I were Mr Jones, I think I'd now extend my indictment of 'the leisured classes' to their flunkeys and understrappers within the BBC. Its outside broadcast unit brought us this week well over seven hours of television from Ascot: but the BBC, unlike ITN, could not even spare a single hour for a live transmission from Central Hall. I've never before thought of the BBC's Director-General, Sir Charles Curran, as a 'frippery fellow'; but I fear that is what he has convicted himself of being this week – and not merely in Mr Jones's eyes either.

☐ It makes a change when someone about whom there is a pretty low threshold of expectation suddenly ups and astonishes the world by behaving rather well. In my book that goes for Costas Georgiou (alias 'Colonel Callan') at the Luanda mercenaries' trial. The newspapers, I notice, kept using the words 'arrogant' and 'truculent' about his acceptance of total responsibility for everything his men had done – some indeed mocking him for deliberately putting on 'a tough guy act'. What, I wonder, would they have preferred – a whingeing 2nd/Lt Calley seeking to pass the buck up the line and preparing to blame everyone but himself? By contrast, what Costas Georgiou chose to do had a belated element of dignity about it – and that is more than can be said for the British Government's performance over the whole affair. I'm glad to see that the Foreign Office is thinking of offering some form of explanation for the ease with which the mercenaries were allowed to fly out of Britain. I hope that explanation will include some comments on the strange alliance that seemed to exist last winter between the airport police and the mercenary organisers. Mr Bob Hughes, Labour MP for Aberdeen North, may be right in blaming the newspapers for carrying recruiting advertisements for mercenaries; but, on the other side of the ledger, perhaps if journalists had not been so rigorously held at bay by the authorities and instead had been allowed to talk to the departing 'soldiers of fortune', some of them might not have found their journey quite so necessary after all.

☐ Telly Savalas, or our old friend Kojak, was not the only person to win a libel action this week. So, too, did Eddie Milne – against the North East Broadcasting Co. and his successor as MP for Blythe, Mr John Ryman QC. The amount of damages in this case was not revealed but it can hardly have been a trifling sum since in a radio broadcast Mr Ryman actually suggested that the man he defeated at Blyth (if only by some 78 votes) might well himself have forged the false document seeking to link Mr Edward Short to a Swiss bank account. The next round in the extraordinary running battle between the former and present MPs for Blyth comes in the autumn when Mr Ryman is due to stand trial on charges concerning his election expenses. Those charges relate to the election of October 1974 and by the time Mr Ryman appears in Newcastle crown court he will virtually have ceased to be an MP in anything but name for more than a year. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the Milne *v.* Ryman duel there is no doubt who has been its victim. The electors of Blyth are being treated very shabbily indeed. As soon as the coming case is settled – and whichever way it goes – the Representation of the People Act must be amended to bring it into line with what its own title proclaims.

☐ It was bad luck on Polly Toynbee last Sunday that the same issue of the *Observer* which carried her sniff of disapproval against the NS for referring to the National Front as 'scum' should also have included on its front page a report of a speech made last Saturday by Mr Kingsley Read of the National Party. Mr Read, who was recently elected to the council in Mrs Castle's constituency of Blackburn, may not himself be willing to admit that he is suffering from 'a personality disorder'; but that is surely the most charitable mental diagnosis to be made of anyone who could say of the murder of the Asian young man in Southall a fortnight ago: 'That was truly unfortunate – one down, one million to go.' The Race Relations Board has quite properly drawn that remark to the attention of the Attorney-General. There is no doubt at all in my mind that in recent weeks there has been a deliberate and concerted effort on the part of those who inhabit the fascist undergrowth to challenge and overthrow a law that was painfully drawn up only a decade ago in order to give protection and, where necessary, legal remedies to racial minorities. Those trying to smash the Act have shown a certain cunning in their timing. In November the Race Relations Board and the Community Relations Commission are both due to be wound up and amalgamated into something that was to be called the Race Relations Commission and is now apparently to be known as the Commission for Racial Equality. One inevitable prelude to the merger is a good deal of confusion and uncertainty among the staffs of both bodies. A confusion that has been compounded by the Government's long delay in announcing a chairman for the new joint body. In the present atmosphere I would hope that that is an appointment that even Mr Callaghan would now treat as a matter of urgency.

☐ Alexander Cockburn's saucy report from America this week lends a certain poignancy to a strange story that Doris Kearns tells in last month's *Atlantic*. Miss Kearns went to work for LBJ at his Texas ranch during the years of his retirement and, by her own account, became his chief confidante in, or so it would seem, somewhat reckless circumstances:

> We talked mostly in the early hours of the morning. Johnson slept poorly those days, waking up at 5.30. Terrified at lying alone in the dark, he came into my room to talk. Gradually a curious ritual developed. I would awaken at 5.00 and get dressed. Half an hour later Johnson would knock on my door, dressed in his robe and pyjamas. As I sat in a chair by the window, he climbed into the bed, pulling the sheets up to his neck, looking like a cold and frightened child.

And to think that such an Age of American Innocence was a mere seven years ago.

Crucifer

This England

Prizes: £1.50 book token for first entry, £1 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Red-haired Tory Councillor Lorna Campion sat in her dressing gown near a pet toad called Fred, with a black cat on her lap, and said: 'Yes, I agree that I've dabbled in the occult and been to many meetings of naked witches. But to say that I put a spell on opposing political parties in the recent local council elections is just – well – a lot of mumbo-jumbo. I did say that I'd like to turn the deputy leader of the Labour Party into a frog. But I didn't do it.' – *News of The World* (Geoffrey O'Brien)

☐ British Rail's experimental advanced passenger train made its last run yesterday from Derby and will go on display at the National Railway Museum, York. – *The Times* (David Shipman)

☐ Middle-class parents who can afford an au pair but don't want one cluttering up the house might consider instead a Video Cassette Recorder, or VCR, which plugs into any television set. – *Sunday Times* (B. Short)

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Anne Bennett

Never the Twain Shall Meet

That baby looks ever so brown, I thought, even allowing for a record sunny day and I hinted as much to Grandma. 'Who's the father?' I whispered and she said that, yes well, she had wondered herself, but Joyce had sworn that he was a very dark Italian. 'Oh,' I said. 'Well there aren't black Italians, are there?' she said. 'You may be right,' I said, thinking of purple cows. Our conversation turned to rent arrears and eventually I went off to this woman for whom so far I had failed to find anywhere new to live, and then the solution swam into my mind.

'It'll kill two birds with one stone,' I said to her, sipping real ground coffee and eating stone-ground bread with honey on – well, she was that sort of person, makes a change from Nescafé. 'He's a factory foreman, his wife left him and his two daughters are in care. He wants them home but he's not domesticated at all, couldn't manage on his own even with help. But you could housekeep for him. That means somewhere for you and Natasha away from your husband and then his two girls could come out of care. It's on a council estate.'

'My dear I want to get away. It makes no difference to me at all where it is, so long as I've Natasha with me.' 'I'll make the arrangements,' I told her and I shot off to tell Mr Harrison that I'd found him a possible housekeeper at last, a friendly lively sort with one little girl. I fixed a meeting for the weekend and from then on it went like a whirlwind, out of my hands really. She would move in finally the day before the girls came out of care. On that day I drove up there and I saw her coming down the road. 'What a relief I've seen you,' she said quickly, 'I was just coming down to your office.' A horrible flat feeling settled over me. 'There's nothing wrong is there?' I said.

'Isn't there just,' she said. 'I can't stay there,' she went on, 'the usual thing that happens to me. He started last night, he tried to get into my room. I had to lock the door. I hardly slept. But don't worry about me. It's all right, a friend in London, she's found a place we can share.' 'You've told him you're going?' I said. 'Oh I couldn't,' she said, 'I didn't want a scene. I thought it better if you did. I'm sorry it's turned out like this but thanks for your help.' And she was gone.

I went on sitting in the car. I could put a note in the door, I thought, or get Rosie to tell him or phone him at work. But I knew that I simply couldn't do any of those things.

He opened the door to me. 'Hello,' he said cheerily, 'come on in.' He went back to the sitting-room and I followed him in and he flopped back in a chair. 'I thought it was Sheila. She must have popped out to do a bit of last minute shopping. She's an energetic sort you know, tires me out, but still it's what we need. It went very well yesterday, both the kids liked her. It's such a load off my mind – she's full of ideas for the house too. Look, would you like a cup of tea? I expect she'll be back in a minute.'

'Mr Harrison,' I said, 'I saw Sheila this afternoon and she's sorry but she can't stay here after all.' And he was looking at me in a sort of bewilderment. 'Can't stay? Can't stay? What do you mean? Everything was all right this morning. I mean she was up early, got my breakfast – cooked one it was. I went off to work, I told her I'd be home about 5 o'clock, there was nothing wrong, I mean if there was she would have said if she was going.' And he was looking at me as if it was my fault.

'No, I don't think she would,' I said, 'she knew how disappointed you'd be. She just didn't like to tell you herself.' 'But what reason? What was it? Something I said? Was it the girls? I spoke to them to be good to her, speak nicely you know. Was it her room? Didn't she like it? We could have swopped,' he said desperately like a man grasping at straws. 'She said you tried to sleep with her,' I said flatly.

He'd been walking up and down but at this he stopped. 'I tell you this, Miss Bennett,' he said, 'and it's God's own truth, I never put a finger on her that way. I never said anything that could make her think I wanted that.' He started to cry, and he got out his handkerchief and wiped his eyes. I put my arm round his shoulders and I said: 'Mr Harrison, I believe you – I do.' We sat there in the drab room which not long before had seemed as if it was to be transformed into a bright place with new paint and coloured carpet and flowers on the window sill and the sun shining through the window. It was an excuse she'd made to leave, the only one she could think up, the real reason was that he was a dull man and his children were equally dull and there was no sparkle in them, nothing going in the whole situation – as far as she was concerned it would never have been right for her in a million years and I had known it all along.

'The girls.'

'I phoned the home,' I said. I couldn't wait to get out of the house. 'I'll start again tomorrow,' I said to him. 'A new ad in the paper – sure to get someone, a more suitable woman.' 'Yes that's right,' he said. I suppose he'll be all right, I thought as I got in the car – he won't do anything. Should I stay, sit with him?

At the inquest the coroner recorded that he killed himself through taking an overdose of drugs, and his wife came back and took the children out of care and they all moved back into the house. His photo was in the local paper. I thought most people are never known to the wider world unless they die unnaturally, like being struck by lightning – and they never know about it then. Which is why I never stand under a tree in a thunderstorm.

Roger Woddis

Kipling Revisited

A quarter of the British Olympic athletes team are immigrants or of immigrant parentage.

I went into a public-house
To get a pint of beer,
The publican he says to me,
'We don't serve nignogs here.'
A fat man in the corner laughed
Until his face turned red,
I went out in the street again
And to myself I said:
O it's coloured this, and coloured that,
And slogans on the wall,
But it's 'Do your best for Britain',
When we go to Montreal.

I went to get a decent job
That I was fitted for,
The foreman frowned and shook his head
And pointed to the door.
And every time that I apply
To join the human race,
A white man's sure to shake his fist
And wave it in my face.
For it's coloured this, and coloured that,
And 'Send the buggers back!'
But when it's Sonia Lannaman,
They wave the Union Jack.

We're black, unwanted aliens,
They scream and call us names,
But it's a different story
When they want us for the Games.
Then no one really notices
The colour of our skin,
And we'll be British to the core,
Especially if we win.
O it's coloured this, and coloured that,
And 'Chuck 'em out, the swine!'
And that's what I'll remember
When I'm kneeling at the line.

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Sybil

A few weeks ago, in a piece called 'Ichabod', I wrote in these pages of a 1964 theatrical disaster, *Season of Goodwill*, for the failure of which, having written it, I was entirely responsible. I did not on that occasion give the honoured names of the leading players, not wishing to involve them further in the unhappy business but now circumstances make it necessary to reveal them. I was lucky indeed. They were Gwen Ffrangçon-Davies, Paul Rogers and Sybil Thorndike. Sybil's husband, Lewis Casson, came to rehearsals, a helpful presence, and also out on tour with us before we opened in London.

At first I called her, of course, 'Dame Sybil' but that was soon swept aside ('just Sybil, dear: it's *easier*.'). I had seen her many times on the stage, sometimes overacting like a mad thing (as Lady Bucktrout in *Short Story* in 1935, I seem to remember her, though I may be wrong, bending down and looking backwards through her legs at the audience), sometimes marvellously restrained and effective, especially as the bitter Mrs Whyte in *Waters of the Moon*.

In her acting there was often an amateur element of enjoyment. Her son, John Casson, has written of a 'hockey-girl heartiness' in her. Amateurs like what they are doing, otherwise why would they bother? True professionals are coldly removed, carefully watching from outside what they are up to. Their only enjoyment comes, if it comes at all, when, after the performance, they feel relaxed and, perhaps, satisfied. Sybil really loved it all the time – before, during and after. It was all a sort of *lark*. Most of those wild chuckles and, even, cackles, came from the heart and were no part of theatrical art.

She became beautiful as she grew older. In youth it was too strong a face for beauty, but the white hair, the softened outlines, the charming smile produced, with the St Joan aura which never quite left her, indeed a saint-like look, which bored her. 'I do wish people wouldn't keep calling me a saint. I'm no such thing. You just ask Lewis!' I did not ask Lewis. As she walked the full length of Westminster Abbey after the memorial service for Sir Lewis, she flashed looks of comfort to those near her as she passed. Upheld by the religious faith she had all her life, she was beautiful indeed. I wrote her, one of the hundreds to do so, a letter of sympathy and begged her not to answer. But of course she did.

We had a happy tour with the play. She had friends everywhere, immediately recognised and remembered and many of them in good works ('Oh, hullo dear! Still doing your wonderful work for the blind? That's the stuff!'). Sometimes on stage things went wrong. On the second night at Brighton, Sybil dried up completely and, unable to hear the prompter valiantly prompting, marched over to the prompt corner and had a good look at the script. The audience, happy as audiences always are when anything unusual happens, applauded wildly (stage cats are very apt to make a stately entrance through the fireplace and over an apparently blazing log fire and, settling themselves well downstage, start to clean themselves. This is the making of any play).

Then, one night in Leeds, Gwen tripped over behind the sofa and entirely disappeared from view. Sybil came right out of character (they were playing two ancient American ladies from the northern state of Minnesota), leant over the sofa's back and said, in bracing English tones: 'Are you all right, dear?' Gwen, struggling up and realising that the play must at once be got back somehow into America, answered with 'Ah sure am. Ah didn't hurt mehself none', plunging us, I fancy, into the deep Deep South. One always felt that Sybil could not only carry off any stage mishap but would thoroughly enjoy it too ('Didn't they *roar*!').

She had a heart the size of the Albert Hall and her politics, as far as they could be said to exist, were part of the pattern, Left of Left and practical as well as idealistic. She wanted everybody to have everything. Few actresses (a star for over 50 years) have had longer careers or can have earned more in their time but I much doubt whether anything substantial remains. Money was for giving away. She would have thought it rude and unkind not to answer a begging letter, and they were frequent, without enclosing a little something.

Almost anybody with a Cause of any sort got her support. Wild eccentrics, misguided or not, appealed to her crusading spirit (even the egregious Montague Summers was a chum). It was typical of her to take Greek tragedy to Welsh miners and make them enjoy it. In everything of real importance she and Lewis thought as one. They were unworldly. On the day when Sir Lewis was knighted (as he went across the Palace courtyard, Sybil muttered: 'I bet he hasn't got a handkerchief'), he had to be gently discouraged from making a stirring speech for Labour (it was the night of the landslide victory in 1945) at a celebration dinner in the Savoy Grill, not perhaps the absolutely ideal setting.

I went to see her last October, taking a melon with me ('Lovely, dear. Kind people will keep bringing flowers.'). She was propped up and, uncomplainingly, in constant pain. She had had her lunch and had been got ready for the afternoon, when it was hoped that she would doze a little. Her brain and memory were both working splendidly, and her great age had done nothing to change her smile. We talked of Lewis: it was such a relief to her that he had gone first ('He could never have managed, dear.'). We talked of her Chelsea life and of the disappearing King's Road shops ('All these *odd* clothes everywhere! They've taken away my dear old grocer and those *darling* vegetable people.'). We talked of various parts she had played, in particular Miss Moffat in *The Corn is Green*. We talked of our tour together and I apologised for all the trouble I had given her and Gwen and Paul, and all for nothing. She reached out and patted my hand. 'Nonsense, dear. I enjoyed every moment of it. It was a lovely play. Didn't we have fun!' She closed her eyes and put her head back. It was the moment for me to tip-toe away. It is not uncharacteristic that the last word that I ever heard her say was the word 'fun'.

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TRIPARTITE WORLD EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCE (4 - 17 June)

EMPLOYMENT, GROWTH AND BASIC NEEDS: A ONE-WORLD PROBLEM

Report of the Director-General of the International Labour Office

vi + 177 pages. ISBN92.2.101510.6 £3.20; Swiss Fr. 20.

More than 700 million people throughout the world live in acute poverty; at least 460 million suffer from severe malnutrition; in the developing countries alone; nearly 300 million are unemployed or underemployed.
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Letters to the Editor

Singapore and Social Democracy

Sir, Mr Christopher Price's article on 'Singapore and Social Democracy' (NS 21 May) presents such a distorted view of Singapore that a reply is called for. Mr Price claims that Singapore 'is a dictatorship decked out with all the trappings of democracy – it has elections, Parliament, judiciary, trade unions, newspapers – the lot'. He claims that these are all politically controlled, and therefore bogus, without, however, giving any evidence for these extravagant claims.

Are elections in Singapore bogus? Are ballot boxes stuffed with fake voting papers? Are voters forced against their will into electing the party they do not want? There are dozens of foreign correspondents in Singapore who would have detected and reported on such malpractices if they had occurred. As for the judiciary, Mr Price may not know that the Privy Council in London is the ultimate Court of Appeal. Does he seriously state that the People's Action Party (PAP) exerts political control over this august body? Even where he cited 'evidence' on loss of personal freedom, he got his facts wrong. There is no Bill to control each and every meeting of university students. No pledge to be sterilised after the second child is required before a marriage certificate is issued.

As regards the proceedings in the Socialist International instituted by the Dutch Labour Party to expel the PAP over the issue of communist detainees, the matter is not as simple as Mr Price sets out. Mr Price regretted that the German Social Democrats have not supported the Dutch proposal. He thought that this was due to their modest investment in the Rollei camera (not watch) factory in Singapore. But the Dutch through Royal Dutch Shell and Phillips have far greater economic stakes in Singapore.

I would offer another explanation for the stand of the German Social Democrats. Last year, during a period of world recession, Singapore's GNP in real terms increased by 4 per cent. Over the last 12 months, consumer prices have increased by only 0.4 per cent. As for unemployment, Singapore continues to import large numbers of guest workers from Malaysia.

I suggest that the Germans, who also excel in these matters, have figured out that a government capable of such performance could do so only with the willing support of the people. A government with such a record can win elections in any country at any time. What need is there of a dictatorship?

LEN P. RODRIGO
International Secretary
People's Action Party
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Picking on the Scots

Sir, Your leading article 'A Policy for Smash and Crash' (4 June) calls for comment. I wonder if you would allow me to make it from the Scottish Nationalist point of view? You suggest Michael Foot should destroy his proposed legislation and start again. I think there is a lot of sense in this. Freedom is indivisible. The Scots running their own affairs is one thing. This is normal, and all the world can recognise freedom and independence when it sees it. A Scotland run by a kind of 'Glasgow Corporation writ large', accountable to the Treasury in England, is certainly not what Scots are aiming for. To be frank I doubt if there are very many voters for Michael Foot and his fellow English Labourites in it.

Your journal has over the years espoused the liberation movements of many countries yearning for their freedom. Yet there seems to be some kind of mental block among the members of the English Labour Party and their fellow travellers regarding Scottish independence. What I think is now required is that responsible journals like your own that influence political opinion should take the necessary bold and imaginative step forward and ask yourselves the question: 'if freedom for Belize, Malawi, Cyprus, Gibraltar . . . is such a splendidly good and socialistic thing, why on earth not for the Scots? Or do you advocate a policy in relation to Scotland's oil wealth of 'smash and grab'?

WINIFRED M. EWING
House of Commons

Sir, The 'two Scotchmen of ancient family' who told A. J. P. Taylor (London Diary 4 June) that 'Scots and Scottish were middle-class genteelisms' were talking nonsense. The nonsense has been expressed several times since Karl Miller quoted Lord Cockburn's defence of 'Scotch' in his book *Cockburn's Millennium* and added the erroneous comment that to say 'Scots' and 'Scottish' instead of 'Scotch' was 'still a point of honour in Scotland with the ignorant and genteel'.

In fact, 'Scots' is the older, Scottish form and 'Scotch' is the English form introduced into Scotland in the 18th century by those members of the 'literati' who were ashamed of their Scottish speech and wished to write correct southern English. Burns's printed proposals for his first book of poems were aimed at the 'literati' and announced the publication 'by subscription of Scotch poems', but when the book appeared it was called *Poems in the Scottish Dialect.* Walter Scott, writing to Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe on 8 September 1802, told him that *'Scotch* must be spelled *Scots* to keep up with the orthography of the antique age'. And he called his own collection of ballads *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border.*

All the titles of collections of Scottish songs, ballads and so on produced by Scottish editors in Scotland throughout the 18th and early 19th centuries, including those of Watson, Ramsay, Bremner, Herd and Scott himself, use the form 'Scots' or 'Scottish', while those produced by English editors in England often use the form 'Scotch'). Scottish insistence on 'Scots' or 'Scottish' rather than 'Scotch' has nothing to do with gentility: it is a form of nationalism and reflects the desire to see the older and Scottish form of the word retained instead of the English form that came into Scotland about the middle of the 18th century.

DAVID DAICHES
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Wellhouse Lane
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Duff Cooper and Munich

Sir, In his reply to my letter (NS 11 June) Mr A. J. P. Taylor merely confirms my suspicions. His theory that Duff Cooper tried to withdraw his resignation after Munich rests only on the unsubstantiated testimony of one man, Michael Wardell – a member of Lord Beaverbrook's entourage who was never a close friend of my father's and still less his sole confidant. What obviously happened is that Wardell – and Mr Taylor after him – has confused the consequences of Neville Chamberlain's first visit to Hitler with those of his third. On 25 *September 1938, when the Prime Minister* appeared, momentarily, to be taking a strong line after all, my father did indeed withdraw an earlier *threat* of resignation and noted in his diary: 'I felt it incumbent upon me, in view of what I had said yesterday about resigning, to state that I was in entire agreement with the policy now adopted.' (*Old Men Forget*, pp 237-8.) A week later, however, after the pass had been finally sold at Munich, there were no such doubts – nor, as his autobiography makes clear, would there have been any time for them. And that was when Mr Taylor wrote his congratulatory letter.

I am sorry that, not having read his *Beaverbrook* in 1972, I did not take up this point then. But I am all the gladder for this belated opportunity to clarify the issue, and thus – unless Mr Taylor continues to prefer the word of a single, scarcely authoritative source to the whole weight of contemporary evidence including my father's own private diaries – to reassure him that his letter was indeed well deserved.

JOHN JULIUS NORWICH
24 Blomfield Road
London W9

Sir, Mr A. J. P. Taylor defends his curious description of the circumstances of Duff Cooper's resignation in 1938 by referring to hearsay evidence published by him in a book and unchallenged. He seems to forget that the minutes of the relevant cabinet meeting have been accessible to researchers for many years. It is Cab. 23/95, Minute 93(38), quoted on p. 296 of my book *Czechoslovakia before Munich, The German Minority Problem and British Appeasement Policy*, London 1973. The minutes confirm what Duff Cooper's son said in his letter to you and not what Mr Taylor says.

J. W. BRUEGEL
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Engels on Honours

Sir, Thanks for reprinting R. H. Tawney's article on Labour and Honours. The saddening game which is now being played by frivolous representatives of the working class was not foreseen by Friedrich Engels, who, in 1892, mocked the bourgeoisie for playing it. In his introduction to the English edition of *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* Engels wrote:

> 'The English bourgeoisie are, up to the present day, so deeply penetrated by a sense of their inferiority that they keep up, at their expense and that of the nation, an ornamental caste of drones to represent the nation worthily at all state fuctions; and they consider themselves highly honoured, whenever one of themselves is found worthy of admission into this select and privileged body, manufactured, after all, by themselves'. (London: Allen & Unwin, 1892 through 1950).

Engels did, however, anticipate Alfred Adler's teaching of the Inferiority Complex.

PAUL ROM
6 Vale Rise
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The World of Biggles

Sir, Chris Jones refrains from defending his knowledge of fighter tactics (Letters 11 June) so I have no quarrel with him there. But I still cannot accept his use of the word 'subsidy' in reference to the funding of the Tornado *multi-role combat aircraft.*

Mr Jones says that Britain's agreement to buy Tornadoes constitutes 'subsidisation' of the aircraft bought by the German and Italian air forces because the British order reduces the unit cost. But it is only a subsidy (as opposed

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to a matter of simple arithmetic) if, as Mr Jones says, 'we don't want and can't afford' the aircraft. That is his opinion; perhaps he would like to produce some relevant facts in support of it. So far he has said that the Tornado is not the fastest plane in the world (and with a couple of exceptions fighter speed has been on a plateau for 20 years) and that it is a prototype with teething troubles, as nearly all aircraft are at some stage.

Mr Jones tells me that I think 'aviation matters should be left to experts and insiders'. That is not so. There is room for better public accountability in British aerospace: it makes aircraft better as well as cheaper. But the industry's secrecy is understandable when Mr Jones and his like ruthlessly quote technical detail out of context to pad out their polemics.

I am sorry that my sense of humour does not amuse Mr Jones. I would be even sorrier if MRCA were to collapse like TSR2 under a vast weight of slung mud, six years too late to recover most of the development costs, leaving us and our partners to buy American fighters or do without.

BILL SWEETMAN

25 Richmond Road
Basingstoke, Hants.

Marchais and the Middle Class

Sir, I should like to propose an alternative explanation for the French Communist Party's opposition to Giscard's tax reform to the one proposed by David Leitch (NS 4 June).

Far from being concerned to protect the hypothetical capital gains of the have-nots, the PCF is angling for the votes of the middle classes, and particularly the former Gaullist voters. The French Communists are convinced, like their Italian counterparts, that the Union of the Left will need the support of broad sections of the bourgeosie if they are to avoid a potential Chilean reaction.

To this end, Georges Marchais and his friends champion national independence, Jeanne d'Arc, De Gaulle, private property, the authority of foremen and executives, law and order, the fight against pornography, parliamentarism.

It so happens, moreover, that the Communists and the Socialists must show that Giscard is not in a position to push through any meaningful reforms if they are to retain their credibility as an alternative to Giscard.

French life is full of paradoxes, but I don't think they are as arbitrary as Mr Leitch suggests.

RUPERT SWYER

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Paris

Historical Best Sellers

Sir, In his interesting review of Edward Shorter's *The Making of the Modern Family* (NS 28 May) Mr Keith Thomas remarks: 'It appears under the imprint of publishers who do not usually handle historical works unless they are likely best-sellers.' I suppose 'usually' and 'likely' may on closer inspection blur the edges of what seems at first sight a sufficiently categorical judgment. But without wishing to disclaim a real and earnest desire to sell as many of our authors' books as we possibly can – neither a dishonourable nor an irrelevant ambition for a publisher – I wonder on what evidence Mr Thomas has formed his opinion?

Among recent historical titles of which we certainly entertained no such expectations I might mention Professor Ashtor's *A Social and Economic History of the Near East in the Middle Ages,* Professor Rudé's *Robespierre* and Stanley Ayling's *The Elder Pitt.* We are publishing this month the second volume of Captain Roskill's *Naval Policy between the Wars* in perfect awareness that the extent of its sales is unlikely to be commensurate with its erudition. We shall publish next year a book by Dr Simon Schama on the Batavian Republic, *The Breaking of the Dykes,* which we believe will have an importance far beyond its sales. From a host of examples on our backlist I cite John Stoye's *The Siege of Vienna,* C. V. Wedgwood's *Truth and Opinion,* J. Huizinga's *Dutch Civilization in the Seventeenth Century,* Carlo Cipolla's *Clocks and Culture,* and his *Cristofano and the Plague.* I should be surprised if the sales of *Religion and the Decline of Magic* did not compare favourably with all or most of these distinguished books.

In any case how is a best-seller to be defined in this field? When we published the English translation of *Braudel* I certainly thought our print figure dangerously high for so large and learned a work. In fact we have twice reprinted, yet by normal book trade standards the total sales figures do not come into this category. On the other hand, most historians that I have talked to would so describe it. Perhaps the term is here extended to mean a book that surpasses expectation.

WILLIAM COLLINS

Collins Publishers
14 St James's Place, SW1

Land Commission Act

Sir, In his London Diary (NS 11 June) Crucifer takes the view that the civil servants ruined the otherwise fine Land Commission Act. Before you start up a new legend, might I remind you what Richard Crossman said about the matter as he records in his *Diaries* Vol. I published 1975, by Hamish Hamilton and Jonathan Cape?

> But frankly we don't need the cumbrous machinery of a Land Commission. It will cause nothing but disillusionment when it is on the Statute Book. [June 1966, p. 533]

> Of course, when I look at legislation I can't leave out the Land Commission Bill. Now in this case, as on leasehold reform, the Dame detested the whole idea. On both these Bills she used the ministerial committee to fight a running departmental battle against them. I think she behaved extremely badly over the Land Commission Bill, using me to try and sabotage, or emasculate, it when I hadn't enough knowledge of my job to stand up to her. Looking back I can see that in principle she was right. The Land Commission as presented in the Labour Party manifesto was a futile thing. The cabinet should have dropped the whole idea once we got a view of it, and achieved the same end by changing the planning laws and the laws of compensation on compulsory purchase. But once the new Ministry of Land and Natural Resources had been created, it was obvious that its Bills were bound to be put through and the Dame and I should not have opposed them. [August 1966, p. 620]

Mr John Silkin in civilian life is a trained lawyer and it may be that he would in private say much the same things about the Community Land Act.

JEFFREY GORDON
Information Officer

British Legal Association
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Against Electoral Reform

Sir, The Hansard Society report on electoral reform has been published, and the expected media approval has just begun. I would like to make a defence of the present system from a personal view which I feel might apply to many thousands of people throughout the country.

The additional member system advocated by the report would mean a large increase in Liberal representation, which would almost certainly hold the balance of power between Labour and the Conservatives. As a Labour Party 'activist' I view this prospect with foreboding. I see little point in trudging the streets canvassing, leafletting etc. with the only possible goal a Labour coalition with the Liberals – such a government could not produce the legislation I as a socialist want. I feel a similar reaction will be expressed by Tory Party workers, and indeed Liberal supporters who would know that their party is in the next Administration. The resulting malaise in politics at a local level would quickly spread to Westminster.

Although I live in a very safe Tory constituency (Harrow West) my efforts are *not* wasted as Conservatives will be 'held prisoner' in the division and unable to campaign in the marginal Harrow Central and East constituencies for fear of a slump in support at the polls.

COLIN GRAY

11 Lulworth Gardens
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Wolfenden and Mr Rees

Sir, I am in agreement with the signatories from the Gay Labour Group of the need for homosexual equality (Letters 11 June), and I am very pleased that the Labour Party's NEC supports a review of the age of consent for male homosexual relations. Perhaps, having read Mary Holland's excellent article on police oppression of Northern Ireland's homosexuals (NS 11 June), they would let Mr Rees know what they think of his repeated refusals to reform the law on homosexuality here. As the law stands the police are completely within their rights when they arrest people, as they have done in recent weeks, merely on suspicion that they were homosexual.

The letter from the Gay Labour Group was titled 'On from Wolfenden', but what can one do when a member of the Labour cabinet seems never to have heard of Wolfenden?

ERNEST HASTINGS

Co. Armagh

Not Without Glory

Sir, I am humbled by John Carey's review of my book, *Not Without Glory: Poets of the Second World War* (NS 28 May), but may I offer an excuse for one of the sins of omission for which he rebukes me.

It is true that Desmond Graham's biography of Keith Douglas is not mentioned in my text, the reason being that Mr Graham's book was not published until after my own had gone to press. Mr Carey, of course, will probably dismiss this excuse as irrelevant since he shows himself uninhibited by such considerations as when he passes clairvoyant judgment on the unpublished 'Collected Works of Vernon Scannell'.

VERNON SCANNELL

5 Holly Street
Rhydyfelin
Pontypridd, Glamorgan

On the Hops

Sir, I must correct the statement in the London Diary of 28 May that the EEC does not approve of English hops, which are often male, and that in future only female hops will be allowed. There is no reason why traditional English hops should not continue to be used for British beer, and our pint is not at risk. English hops are female, pollinated by about six males per thousand females, which produce the hop cone used in brewing.

G. BROOME
General Manager

The Hops Marketing Board
Paddock Wood
Tonbridge

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BOOKS & ARTS

Philip French

Where They Can't Follow

The Life of Raymond Chandler by FRANK MACSHANE *Cape* £5.50

Over a period of 20 years around the turn of the century, three writers spent their happy schooldays at Dulwich College. Each was destined to end up in American exile and all three created serial characters who in very different ways upheld the public-school code and achieved public existences quite independent of their creators. The novelists were P. G. Wodehouse, Raymond Chandler and C. S. Forester; their heroes, Bertie Wooster, Philip Marlowe and Horatio Hornblower.

Chandler was born in Chicago in 1888 and came by chance to London at the age of seven when his well-connected Irish mother returned home to live in genteel poverty after the break-up of her marriage to a drunken American engineer. On leaving school he first tried the civil service, and then spent several years as a literary journalist, but did not write well enough to make a name or fast enough to become a successful hack. So at the age of 23 he reluctantly returned to the States, settling in Los Angeles in 1912. He never lost his rather dreamy love of England and he later attributed enormous importance to his classical education:

> If I hadn't grown up on Latin and Greek, I doubt if I would know so well how to draw the line between what I call a vernacular style and what I should call an illiterate faux-naïf style.

His authorised biographer, Frank MacShane of Columbia University, concurs, and sees Chandler's sojourn in London as a crucial shaping influence:

> Unlike James, Joyce or Conrad, who were in exile from worlds they detested, Chandler was in exile from a world he thought he loved. Instead of his admired England, he lived in a place where values seemed to shift with the tides. No wonder he clung to the code of the Public School gentleman and applied it to his fictional hero as well.

Chandler remained in Southern California for the rest of his life, and when eventually he made a triumphant visit to London as a world-famous novelist in 1952 this was only the second time he'd left the Pacific coast. The first was to serve in the Great War, during which (we are here told for the first time) he was the sole survivor of a bombarded Canadian infantry unit on the Western Front. (An unpublished prose sketch, 'Trench Raid', is the only account of his war experiences, though one might now read the World War II part of *The Long Goodbye* in a different way.) He was a citizen of Los Angeles a year before DeMille drifted into the dusty suburb of Hollywood to shoot *The Squaw Man*, and he saw the city he was to chronicle spread and sprawl. An eloquent passage in *The Little Sister* (1949) has Marlowe look back to those early days when 'little groups who thought they were intellectuals used to call it the Athens of America. It wasn't that, but it wasn't a neon-lighted slum either'.

Unlike other literary observers of Southern California, Chandler did not arrive as an established writer, and in fact did not write again for publication until the 1930s. By then he was married to a beautiful former model, 18 years older than him; Cissy had left her pianist husband for Chandler when she was 48, but did not marry him until four years later, a few weeks after the death of his mother in 1924. He was also a highly paid executive in the oil business which he had entered after the war as a bookkeeper. We have been encouraged by Chandler and others to believe that he lost his job in 1932 because of the Depression. We now learn that he was fired on account of his drunkenness, womanising, inefficiency and general tactlessness in handling clients and colleagues.

In a spirit of extraordinary dedication and sobriety, the unemployed Chandler set out to re-train himself as a writer, and he chose to specialise in hard-boiled detective fiction for *Black Mask*, preferring the honesty of the pulp magazines to the glib falsities of the better-paying 'slicks' like *Saturday Evening Post*. 'To exceed the limit of a formula without destroying it is the dream of every magazine writer who is not a hack,' he observed. He was too self-critical and ambitious to be a hack, and over the next five years wrote a mere 20 stories, never earning more than $1,500 a year. In the process he became a major theorist and philosopher of his chosen genre, as well as a supreme craftsman.

Having served his self-appointed apprenticeship he then saw the time was ripe to 'cannibalise' these stories (plots were always a problem for him) and transform them into the Marlowe novels, beginning with *The Big Sleep* in 1939, which drew on the *Black Mask* tales, 'Killer in the Rain' and 'The Curtain'. When his cannibalised stories were later reprinted in book form, only one person appears to have objected to the author's self-plagiarism – and that with a marvellous irony was E. Howard Hunt, fellow thriller writer and future Watergate conspirator, in a 1952 letter to Chandler from the American Embassy in Mexico.

In expanding the stories into novels, he was able to lay greater emphasis on the delineation of character and on topographical writing, to indulge his ear for dialogue and the creative use of slang, to develop the ethical vision of his private eye hero and his Dickensian notion of Los Angeles. Whereas his hard-boiled predecessor Dashiell Hammett was a carver, constantly chipping away at his material, reducing it to a spare minimum, Chandler was a moulder, continually embellishing and enriching his books. Unlike the former Pinkerton agent Hammett, Chandler had little direct knowledge of crime or police procedure. He had four novels and all his stories behind him before he spent a day with the L.A. chief of detectives making the notes that he was later to draw on for Marlowe's incarceration in *The Long Good-Bye*.

Chandler was 45 when he turned to fiction, and 50 when his first novel appeared. Eventually he came to the attention of Hollywood, on whose doorstep he had lived for years. After 1943, the year he was hired by Paramount to script *Double Indemnity*, his financial worries were over, with money coming in steadily from screenplays, radio and television series, and the publication of his books throughout the world. His critical reputation rose steadily, especially in Britain, and he was acclaimed by Auden, Edmund Wilson, Maugham, Priestley and Elizabeth Bowen. As H. A. L. Craig remarked in a justly celebrated 1951 Third Programme talk, colourfully entitled 'The Whisky of Affliction – The Pistols and Pieties of Raymond Chandler':

> Already on the dustjackets Raymond Chandler's thrillers begin to entice, not by the silk legs and upset bodies but by the choosey noddings of the best literary doormen.

But this did not make Chandler happy. For all his charm, kindness and amiability (Priestley described him as looking 'like a boffin in an Ealing comedy'), he found it as difficult as ever to get on with people. Hollywood had sent him back to the bottle; the constant ill-health of the ageing Cissy was a daily problem; above all, he was a deeply divided man, and especially so over his work. He craved recognition from the literary world and then rejected it. In letters and essays he made out a convincing case for the importance of crime fiction, yet concluded that 'the better you write a mystery the more clearly you demonstrate that the mystery is not worth writing'. He believed that 'there are no classics of crime or detection', a classic to him being 'a piece of writing which exhausts the possibilities of its form and can never be surpassed', but his six major novels are classics in that sense, and he and Hammett did largely exhaust the hard-boiled branch of the genre 'You have to go where they can't follow you,' he said of his imitators: Chandler was not sure where that was, while Hammett eventually chose silence. When Cissy died in 1954, he wrote to a British friend:

> She was the beat of my heart for 30 years
> She was the music heard faintly at the edge

Among this week's contributors:

MALCOLM BRADBURY has just been awarded The Royal Society of Literature/Heinemann Award for his novel *The History Man*, published last year.

Among J. G. BALLARD's novels are *Crash* (1973) and *High-Rise* (1975); a collection of new short stories, *Low-Flying Aircraft*, will be published by Cape later this year.

JOHN MORTIMER's plays *Heaven* and *Hell* are on at the Greenwich Theatre.

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of sound. It was my great and now useless regret that I never wrote anything worth her attention, no book that I could dedicate to her.

Certainly after Cissy's death he found it almost impossible to write and his final novel *Playback*, worked up from an unfilmed screenplay, is a poor effort. These last desperate years leading to his death in 1959 resemble in close detail the agonising final phase in Hemingway's life that was taking place at much the same time. Fortunately MacShane handles them without the ghastly relish A. E. Hotchner brought to his *Papa Hemingway*. Indeed he has written a serious, low-key book that provides us with most of the information we need about Chandler and combines it with sensible criticism and evaluation. There are some errors of fact, particularly in matters connected with Hollywood; he is not too perceptive about California; the arrangement of his notes is infuriating. Certain readers might feel that he pushes too hard his thesis of Chandler's 'double-vision – half-English, half-American', and the way it made him peculiarly well-equipped to observe the world. Some would dispute for instance the contention that 'what gives Chandler his particular flavour is that while using a standard British sentence structure, he also employs a predominantly American vocabulary'. But this is an engaging, literate book, and it is encouraging to see MacShane conclude with the bold claim that Chandler was 'one of the most important writers of his time, as well as one of the most delightful'. There have been too many recent biographers who don't seem to like their subjects.

David Caute

Class Classifications

The Labour Party and the Working Class
by TOM FORESTER *Heinemann* £3.75

At a first reading of this book I was much struck by Mr Forester's virtues as a historian and sociologist: clearly presented answers to clearly posed questions, a rational tone, sound analytical gifts, general lucidity. A great deal of ground is covered with admirable concision. Now I don't wish to retract these tributes entirely, but have to report that a more exacting pursuit of the book's themes, marshalling of evidence and conclusions produced a less favourable impression.

It may be that I am not the reader at whom the book is aimed – no expert on the subject, certainly, yet somewhat too familiar with the terrain covered and the style of the journey. The trouble is, I think, that Forester has tried to weave two different types of book into one: first, a general survey, mainly based on secondary sources, of a variety of basic topics that a sixth-former or student might wish to ponder while studying for university entrance or a degree; and secondly, a piece of primary research (based on sadly limited evidence) of the sort undertaken by students about to *get* a degree. Well, if you do it well, and Forester has a first-class brain, the learner can become the teacher overnight: what the author discovered yesterday zooms into the college libraries for easy digestion by his junior contemporaries.

But do the two halves of his book really fit together? Not comfortably. Much of the ground covered in the first half – the nature of social class, objective and subjective class, class and class consciousness, differences between local and national political patterns, the role of social democracy under capitalism, the role of conference in the Labour Party, the Party's parliamentary tradition – really seems superfluous to the questions he addresses in greater detail and attempts to answer by means of primary research: is *local* involvement in, and commitment to, Party activity on the wane? And is *working-class* participation in Labour Parties becoming a thing of the past?

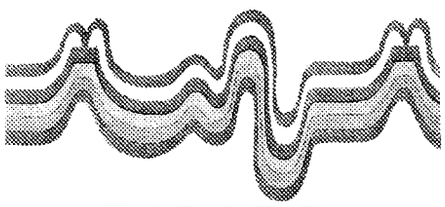
Then there is the problem of the evidence that Forester assembles in order to reach his conclusions. Making his principal target Barry Hindess's *The Decline of Working Class Politics* (1971), which was based mainly on a study of Liverpool City Labour Party, Forester challenges Hindess's thesis that the Party and the working class had achieved almost total divorce by the late Sixties. How does he challenge it? (I should perhaps add that I have no bias on this particular question.) Well, he examines the results of a questionnaire returned to him in 1973 by 464 members of Kemptown (Brighton) Labour Party. Trouble is, if Liverpool is only Liverpool, Kemptown is only Kemptown – and if all towns are only, some are more only than others. Although this second, 'thesis' part of the book culminates in a blaze of appendices, statistical tables, complex questionnaires and general degree-worthy apparatus, there isn't really a story to tell, despite the grouping of human beings into 'C1s', 'D2s' and other algebraic entities. (In the end one always goes back to Graves, Hodges and Orwell, with their utterly unscientific reliance on just looking at people and talking to them.)

'The survey,' writes Forester, 'showed that Kemptown Labour Party is predominantly composed of skilled and unskilled workers, *but slightly less so than either the local or national population as a whole.*' (Italics added.) One would not normally proceed straight from such a statement to the conclusion that 'the link between party and class is as strong as ever' (in local Labour Parties) unless it could be shown that the working-class component of local Parties had in the past been proportionately less than the working-class proportion of the population as a whole. Forester says this is so, but the pages (86-93) in which he surveys evidence from the past generate no clear conclusion, partly because Forester confuses himself by constantly juggling two separate issues, the *proportion* of working-class Labour Party members and, secondly, their relative degree of *activity* compared with middle-class members. Much of the evidence is impressionistic, fragmentary, contradictory or – not Forester's fault – clouded by unclear categories. As he says, comparatively little work has been done on local Labour Parties, though we know that the national membership of both the Labour and Conservative Parties has declined by about 50 per cent during the last 20 years.

It may be that Forester's chosen pincushion, Barry Hindess, exaggerated the rapid decline of working-class participation, and it is certainly the case, as Forester most convincingly shows, that too many writers on this subject have allowed their own socialist passions and their own disenchantment with Labour governments to colour their vision of a golden past and of a Labour Party originally committed to complete socialism which gradually degenerated into a party of parliamentary reformism and compromise. And there is a further semi-fallacy, which I suspect Forester himself shares, which equates the degree of socialist commitment within the Party with the degree of proletarian participation. Yet the sacrosanct Clause 4 of 1918, the holy text of the true socialists, was itself the product of the middle-class Fabian appetite for social engineering.

I don't suggest that Forester is wrong,

The realm of the unexplained from the author of SUPERNATURE



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merely that his argument is so hedged about by ifs and buts and maybes that no conclusions about working-class participation can reasonably be derived from his text. I hope it isn't unfair to quote a passage which is found snoozing rather quietly on page 90 and which reinforces my impression of the author's high integrity. He writes:

> The lack of evidence, and the problems of assessing evidence based on different 'classifications' of people make it difficult, if not impossible, to draw any firm conclusions as to whether 'working-class' participation in local Labour parties is going up or coming down.

By page 90 that was rather my own conclusion.

Richard Shone

In a Whirl

Vorticism and Abstract Art in the First Machine Age Vol I: Origins and Development by RICHARD CORK *Gordon Fraser* £29.00

This is the remarkable first volume of a two-part study which has occupied Richard Cork for several years. That it would be minutely documented and full of surprises was apparent two years ago when he organised the Hayward exhibition, *Vorticism and its Allies*, with its overwhelming catalogue entries and attention to every Vorticist scrap and snap. It established once and for all that there is much more to Vorticism than Wyndham Lewis, *Blast* and a few subservient imitators – a view scandalously upheld in 1956 under the Rothenstein régime, when the *Wyndham Lewis and Vorticism* exhibition at the Tate aroused the anger of Roberts and Bomberg and distorted both Lewis and the movement itself.

The scope of the book and its formidable cast of writers, painters, sculptors and critics does not appear to have daunted the author; he steers us skillfully from one section to the next – from each artist's early years at the turn of the century, through to the beginning of the War and the only Vorticist exhibition (1915). The effect of so much detail, sometimes wearying, never shatters one's confidence of being, all the while, in the hands of someone anxious to tell the truth. The artists are treated individually, scrutinised within a framework of contemporary events, prevailing aesthetics and some extremely entertaining socio-biographical detail. Lewis, with whom Cork carries on a love-hate relationship, remains the dominant figure but there is highly perceptive and sympathetic writing on Bomberg, Epstein and Gaudier-Brzeska in particular. I feel he underrates Wadsworth's contribution and is over-attentive to Nevinson's hijacked Futurism.

The book's really valuable achievements lie in the rediscovery of work previously thought lost (though much does in fact appear to have gone forever), the thoroughness with which contemporary periodicals and reviews have been combed, a narrative enlivened by the waspish memories of Kate Lechmere, Frederick Etchells and others, and the author's ability to place Vorticism within the modern movement here and abroad – though sometimes at the expense of fairness to individuals working in a different but equally compelling mode. He also devotes attention to the conflicts of personality and thought which gave to Vorticism a restlessness and insecurity that presaged its early dissolution.

Richard Cork sees Vorticism as the most vital contribution made by the English to the European avant-garde. Many illustrations are a triumphant vindication of such a view; Vorticism established, albeit precariously, that art need not rely on figurative representation – though much of the work produced by its adherents retains some reference to the world about them. While Cork explores at length Vorticism's formative influences – Cubism, Futurism, Kandinsky, Imagist poetry – he is at pains, as was Lewis, to disentangle such influences from the eventual form it took and give back to the movement its identity.

Here of course lies the difficulty. In trying to account for every move made, each step towards or away from the ideal Vorticist work, he tends to ignore the often contradictory and capricious sprints of an artist's intuition. The ground is whipped away from under their feet. It is in this connection that he intrudes too heavily into a commentary that is otherwise admirably objective. Every so often he tries to push his painters towards abstraction and becomes testy with them when they fail him. 'Come on, come on,' he seems to say, 'leave out those details, don't bother with that eye, those fingers, that jug.' He is like a schoolmaster chastising pupils who are hardly ready for what they will later find they can do. The very young William Roberts gets a few smacks on the head and Edward Wadsworth smarts from the author's ruler. To discover what actually was done is obviously the point of a close examination such as we find here and to measure it with *all* the benefits of hindsight seems inappropriate. In general, however, Cork's analysis of the works show an uncommon sensitivity, particularly in that prickly area of social and psychological implication. This is all the more necessary in a movement which in many ways was literary and theoretical in impulse and which gives striking evidence of belonging very much to its period. One of the few abstract paintings reproduced in the book which seems now to be uncompromisingly divorced from its period is by Vanessa Bell – an artist from the other camp.

This leads me to Richard Cork's account of Lewis's relations with Fry and his circle at the Omega Workshops. He has bent over backwards to be fair to Bloomsbury, though one detects a strain of almost puritanical disapproval of what he calls 'Fitzroy Square aesthetics'. He's not very fond of pleasure – sniffs at Spencer Gore's nightclub decorations for being 'playful' and scorns the 'unruffled gentility' of an early Etchells *On the Grass*. Cork accounts for the differences which arose between Lewis and Fry as a compound of aesthetic disagreement and incompatibility of temperament. When Lewis and three other artists slammed the door on Fry at the Omega, the reactions of the parties involved are revealing. Fry maintained a prudent silence, Bloomsbury rallied round, Vanessa Bell tried to find out the truth of the matter, broken friendships were deplored. On the other side Lewis began his lifelong Bloomsbury vendetta after a certain amount of inexplicable behaviour in which he blamed his fellow rebels for the allegations made against Fry. But what became clear to him was the urgent need for an establishment through which he could express his own brimming identity. Hence the Rebel Art Centre and the emergence of the Vorticist Group.

One feels that without the quarrel polemics and belligerent rivalries, Vorticism would hardly have seen the light of day something which perhaps limited its achievements. It is interesting to note in this connection both Bloomsbury's generosity an

Tom Paulin

Deceased Effects

We go to auctions now and bid for things
That people once belonged to. They've shed their lives
And kept a dust that never quite scrubs off.
Unfaithful survivors, they fall to scruffy dealers,
The poor, or the ambitious young. Quaint now,
The functional metal beds the dead once woke in
When sirens went at five and mills clanked all night.

Those little bits of china that were fixed
To mantleshelves in neat front rooms, the chairs
They sat in, all the odds and ends they lived among,
Parts of a pattern that only seemed to fit,
Tell us nothing and never go for much –
Though last week there was one lot that told
Its own sparse story: a pile of photographs,
The wedding sometime, plain, unfashionable,
Six fresh-faced children behind dusty glass,
The couple older on an anniversary, and then,
Almost too pat, a mountain of wreaths on a grave,
Knocked down to someone for the frames.

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the sad decline of the Omega – though the desk produced there which Richard Cork calls 'the most elegant and professional of all Omega products' was in fact designed by Duncan Grant. And in the heat of the row Vanessa Bell could write to Fry of Lewis's large, lost painting *Kermesse* (then on view in the 1913 'Post Impressionist and Futurist Exhibition') as 'the only English [picture] at the show which seems at all interesting' and that it was 'much better' than its earlier version.

This book and its sequel will obviously be the prime study of the subject. It is a splendid addition to the growing number of studies exploring British art of the period – a phase richer and more valuable than many writers have hitherto been prepared to acknowledge. Parochial need not mean second-rate. Richard Cork writes with an infectious enthusiasm (if not always attractively) and a breadth of knowledge which can rarely be faulted.

Paul Addison

Rose Watered

Victor Cazalet by ROBERT RHODES JAMES
Hamish Hamilton £5.95

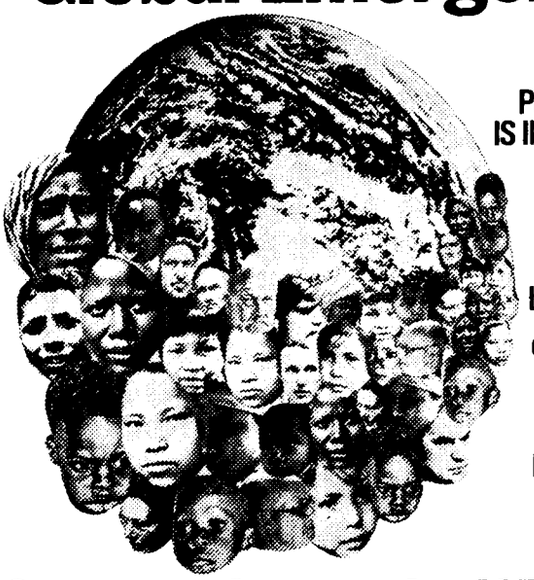
Victor Cazalet was born into a wealthy late Victorian family of Huguenot origin and high social connections: the Queen herself, who sometimes borrowed a villa belonging to the family, stood godmother to him. Between Eton, which he detested, and Christ Church, where he had the time of his life, he served as an officer on the Western Front and accompanied the British Military Mission to Admiral Kolchak's forces in Siberia. As Conservative MP for Chippenham from 1924, he emerged as a charming lightweight whose recreations included society, squash, music and world affairs. Towards the age of forty he began to be more active politically, championing first of all Zionism, and later the wartime Polish government-in-exile. The second of these two causes led to his death. In 1940 it was arranged that Cazalet should become liaison officer between the British Government and the Free Poles, who were led by General Sikorski. In July 1943 he and Sikorski were on their way back to London after a tour of Polish forces in the Middle East when their plane crashed while taking off from Gibraltar. Later it was alleged that Churchill and the British secret service had sabotaged the aircraft – a good story, if there were any evidence to support it.

The Cazalets lost half of their family fortune when the Bolsheviks expropriated their property in Russia, but fortunately the other half was more than sufficient to keep the magic carpet airborne. Victor Cazalet was able to travel and entertain in style, so much so that it would be a challenge to list the places he did *not* visit – Australia? – or the people he did *not* meet – Lenin, for a certainty. From the age of 13 until his death he kept a lively journal, the backbone of Mr Rhodes James's book, but Cazalet was too nice and too unworldly to be a great diarist. In spite of his globetrotting and his restless social round, he was essentially a gentle creature in search of praise rather than power.

A Christian Scientist, he looked for the good in people and did not smoke, drink or swear, though on one occasion only he broke the last of these rules in order to express an opinion about Lord Beaverbrook. Though by no means a simpleton he did not recognise that the great were often manipulating him rather than pouring out their hearts. Henry Ford easily convinced him that it was an act of benevolence on his part to arrange for 15-cent lunches to be carried round to his employees at work. Baldwin gently planted on him a thoroughly malicious account of Edward VIII. When Churchill took up the young Cazalet, Cazalet accepted him at face-value as a genius; when Churchill dropped the slightly older Cazalet, Cazalet accepted others' criticisms of Churchill. Cazalet's diary is indeed a record of straightforward boyish sincerity, refreshing with rosewater the very same social world which 'Chips' Channon, in his own diaries, portrayed with unerring wit and malice.

Margot Asquith wrote to Cazalet on the eve of his political career: 'Any young man of real courage and even less than your brain could make a reputation nowadays.' In spite of this encouragement, Cazalet was a drifter who gradually disappointed the hopes placed in him. Mr Rhodes James contends that by the late Thirties Cazalet had become a much more mature and significant figure. Certainly he adopted the Polish cause

Global Emergency



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with enthusiasm, did a lot of work for it, and in 1942 threatened to kick over the traces and vote against Churchill if the British Government recognised the Russian annexation of the Baltic states. But in a more fundamental sense Cazalet remained boyishly dependent upon the guidance of older men. Churchill had dropped him and caused disillusion, but Sikorski, who was 20 years his senior, had taken him up. Mr Rhodes James displays his customary skill and readability in bringing Cazalet to life, but he is naturally loath to admit that after all his subject was a complete misfit in the world of politics. To probe ruthlessly into Cazalet's weakness as a person would be cruel, but to take this kindly and aimless snob seriously as a public figure is impossible.

John Mortimer

Husbanded

Anna by DAVID REED *Secker & Warburg* £3.50

The snobbery of madness, from Dionysus through the legend of the Holy Fool to its most recent, beguiling and popular expression in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, has never been more fashionable. Fleeing from the irrationality of religion, and yet for ever alarmed by the hard and stony path of sanity, modern man finds no one more attractive than the nutcase. Is there not something inexpressibly noble about the insane? That fierce rejection of the tyranny of common sense, and of the tedious obligation of thought for others, and of the heavy chains of logic, have promoted, in certain eyes, the schizophrene to the status of revolutionary and saint. Does each home where the wife screams suddenly and breaks the crockery, or the teenage son lies inert, curled up and facing the wall, house some mute John Clare or at least an inglorious St Theresa whom the dullards of the NHS are too dim to recognise? Or is the truth that the greatest genius, Shakespeare or Mozart, reaches the peak of sanity and that madness is no more romantic than cancer of the rectum, and as unilluminatingly painful.

Such questions are not asked directly in David Reed's modest, honest and factual account of his wife's sickness. The book is too direct, too painful and too committed to the truth to indulge in generalisations of any sort. David Reed tells a plain tale and it is his courage in telling it plainly that gives the book its nobility. But it's the questions it raises about our reactions to madness and our tenuous grasp on our own reason that make it a book of enormous importance. At least it will dispel the comforting movie legend that the mentally sick are a load of amiable eccentrics whom it would be a great gas to take out on a day's fishing.

'David Reed' is the pseudonym of a writer who was married to a beautiful German-born wife some years older than himself, and with children, friends and an au pair was living that sort of comfortable fulfilled and civilised existence which seems to lead, far more than narrower lives or more constricted beliefs, to madness. When his wife became sick he resolved to live with her through the experience. It would be hard, he knew; but the alternative, the vegetable sedated existence in the hospital ward, the cruel electric shocks and the bitter isolation from society, were too horrible to contemplate. Anna would get better by remaining in the family, and the family itself would benefit, in wisdom at least, from participating in, and living through, her madness.

He had read, of course, *The Divided Self*. There is a sanity, Laing had said, within insanity. Perhaps, David Reed thought, it was a higher sanity than a poor working writer could command. And had not one of Laing's patients reached a cure merely by frequent viewing of Fellini's *La Strada*? Anna Reed seemed to gain a similar relief from thinking of an old Bogart movie. Madness could be lived through and might even be an enriching, an ennobling experience. His hopes were at their peak when R. D. Laing arrived in person for a consultation.

The meeting with Laing in the book is written with beautiful simplicity. Laing was gentle, kind, and attentive to Anna and sure she related to the family. He said that the psychosis was almost over, although it might be 'shocked back' by the use of ECT. He qualified this by saying that the situation was always subject to change. David Reed asked if he was really helping his wife by staying with her. She must be for ever conscious of his love and his passionate longing for her to return to the world of sanity. Perhaps she felt that love as a perpetual rebuke? But no, Laing assured him, 'It is exactly what she needs.' So the husband stayed with his wife, caring for her, desperately trying to woo her back as a man might struggle against the rivalry of an irresistible but fatal lover. And not long after he woke up to find her trying to strangle one of the children, and finally she burnt herself to death.

At moments Anna grabbed her husband, desperately hungry for sex. At others she could write,

> Neither father nor mother
> neither brother nor son
> simply my husband
> my husband I am not satisfied with
> not the way he speaks
> not his way with the children
> not his way of touching me
> this man who is my husband who has no right to touch me –
> Madam, then he cannot be your husband.

This is a bewitching piece of writing, and as so often happens the mad, like the Devil, get all the best lines. But it seems not to be true and its beauty cannot equal the courage David Reed shows in printing it and in writing this extraordinary book. The husband's words lead us by a painful path up to the clear air of reason. The wife's beckon us down that fascinating cul de sac where madness lies.

Malcolm Bradbury

Hello, Dollar

JR by WILLIAM GADDIS *Cape* £5.95 and £3.50

In 1955 William Gaddis published his first novel, *The Recognitions*, a perplexing, anagramatic, massive book which speculated on the themes of forgery, falsity and cash, and the place of art in the modern technologised world. Recognition was, in fact, what the book was slow to get. But it subsequently made its way as one of the contemporary American classics of experiment, and it has some real claim to have influenced the development of the massive, modern, post-psychological novel as this has evolved latterly in the United States. John Barth and, especially, Thomas Pynchon have been running with the same baton; and Pynchon's *V* and his *Gravity's Rainbow* have shown much the same obsessions, with the creation of plot and verbal text in a world of science and technical energy which has tipped irretrievably over the edge into entropic decline. The 'technetronic' novel has indeed become an American species; highly regarded, but nonetheless requiring of its readers a certain specialised tolerance. Heavily lexical, given to massive textual proliferation, elaborated learning, and complex inner ciphering, evolving through characters who do not so much make as suffer a plot evolving itself for plot's own sake, it invites the reader to a kindness not always easily granted to fiction.

It is, then, only fair warning to say that with his second novel Gaddis has, 20 years later, come back to enjoy the salad days of the species. *JR* is 726 pages of decidedly hard reading, a work of minimalist conventions, heavy on inventions and play. Modern America, according to the now very recognisable conventions of this species, is metaphorised as a universe of cybernetics and capital. The characters live in a dominantly technical world, among mechanisms and systems; behind the systems is capital itself, threading the mysteries of cash and investment throughout their fictional lives. In this world of master-plots and manipulations, Wall Street apparently holds the key, provoking African wars, company collapses and financial chicaneries of all kinds. But the system is open to leakage, and this comes when an 11-year-old schoolboy, JR himself, acquires the same rich arts of manipulation.

Speaking to brokers and Wall Street through a clotted handkerchief down the school telephone, he starts from matchbook enterprises to build up a massive commercial empire covering the entire country. The first word of the text is 'money,' spoken in 'a voice that rustled,' and money, spawning, interconnecting dividing, dominates and plots the book It is an ancient theme of fiction, but Gaddis wants it for a total vision; *JR* is packed with learned financial elaborations so dense

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that the work is surely ripe for serialisation in the *Wall Street Journal* – habitual readers of which will probably understand this stratum of the plot much better than I do.

But beyond this elaborated satirical plot are a set of dominating conventions. They arise from the vision, and they give an appropriate technology for the novel. It is a difficult technology; the book is seamless, continuous, unchapterised text, presented almost entirely through dialogue, though here and there a modest gesture at description, in hepped-up Faulknerese, intrudes. The dialogue is mostly unassigned, but this matter repays effort; there *are* characters, with names like diCephalis and Vogel, Bast and Joubert, and something like a minimalised identity. But the convention permits them no psychological existence; they are speakers rather than agents, blurting out a continuous, unwinding talkshow in conference rooms and bedrooms, toilets, cafeterias and museums, over telephone and intercoms and radios and television sets. The scenes are set-pieces, often of local satirical intent, but webbed into the large cash-plot, which evolves through a structure of coincidental meetings and sleight-of-hand lexical transitions.

The two main settings enforce the theme of a technological, open-energy world displacing humanism, feeling and art. One is a high school in the Long Island commuting hinterland, dominated by a massive audio-visual system, foundation funded, which has utterly replaced Gutenberg and his works. The principal doubles as president of the local bank; landgrabbing and financial wheeling-and-dealing dominate school business; the faculty, who provide much of the cast of the book, are down-at-heel rentiers with torn suits and blistered marriages or divorces, maintaining a secondary existence in the fiscal and bohemian world of New York City, just down the train-tracks, Manhattan and Wall Street being the other main setting of the book. The highspot of the school civics course is, inevitably, lessons in selfhood through investment, these are not lost on JR, who exploits Long Island, Manhattan and the universe, aided by an uneasy acolyte, Edward Bast, failed musician in a cash-nexus world, who brings forward the old Gaddis theme of art displaced.

The worlds interlock and artfully intersect, providing the occasion for an elaborate plot and an elaborate technique, and a satirical manner that both succeeds and fails. It succeeds in generating massive invention; but at this date the satirical and technical assumptions have reached the point of obviousness. They are light, and Gaddis has a relaxed way of dissipating his efforts by overlong scenes and local okes. His world of rentier farceurs is rich, his invention powerful; but in the end *JR* acks the density of a *Gravity's Rainbow* or the lexical precision of his own first novel. It is a book of considerable indulgence; and underneath the technical display re strong hints of those simpler, earlier ovels of financial and commercial wizardry hat used to fascinate the Fifties, especially vhen written by J. P. Marquand. But it *is* 26 pages, and the codes are oblique; I nay, or may not, have missed something.

Science Fiction

J. G. Ballard

Down to Earth

The Lives and Times of Jerry Cornelius by MICHAEL MOORCOCK *Allison & Busby* £3.50
The Stochastic Man by ROBERT SILVERBERG *Gollancz* £3.30
The Prayer Machine by CHRISTOPHER HODDER-WILLIAMS *Weidenfeld* £3.50
The Space Machine by CHRISTOPHER PRIEST *Faber* £3.50
Universe 2 edited by TERRY CARR *Dobson* £3.50

Since the demise of the Space Age after little more than a decade's activity – from Sputnik 1 in 1957 to the last Skylab mission in 1974 – science fiction has breathed far more freely. Traditionalist sf, with its huge emotional investment in a limitless technological future, has always looked rather warily at the Russo-American space programmes, the real-life upstarts who threatened to spoil everything by exposing just how restricted the imaginative possibilities of space exploration actually were. The old-guard writers and readers either ignored the Cape Kennedy launchings altogether – for all Arthur C. Clarke's hobnobbing with the Apollo astronauts his *2001* is rooted firmly in Forties planet fiction – or climbed back thankfully into the galactic centrifuge and locked the doors after them. *Star Trek* fans live in sealed worlds, furnishing their homes like the control room of the Enterprise – and in Los Angeles, I am told, some have sought plastic surgery to have their ears flame-tipped like Mr Spock's.

Given this retreat from all the embarrassments of reality, the middle ground in sf has recently been taken over by more progressive spirits, no longer living in the future and trying to make the most of the unique possibilities of a fiction that equally turns its back on the past. Michael Moorcock's *The Lives and Times of Jerry Cornelius* is a good example of the type. Jerry Cornelius, rootless and ambisexual, a man with no yesterday and no tomorrow, has become a cult hero precisely because of his total commitment to the present. The errand boy of a faltering apocalypse, he moves across an entropic world ravaged by every conceivable nemesis – plague, world war, media saturation – taking part in a series of unresolvable adventures with bored war-lords, renegade bankers and marooned pontiffs. Not only are the basic materials of time and space meaningless, but values of any kind, including those – deliberately – of plot and storyline. Cool, elegant and witty, this is the end of the world as it might be described by the DJ of some hyper-cerebral pirate station. This is your central nervous system calling . . .

The title of Robert Silverberg's *The Stochastic Man* says much about the changing styles and needs of commercial sf. Even ten years ago the use of 'stochastic' would have meant an instant rejection slip (I well remember my own satisfaction when I first sneaked the word into a short story). In those days sf gladly welcomed an army of invisible, illuminated, shrinking, and impossible men, but stochastic . . . ? Today, however, a thorough grounding in structuralism and psycholinguistics is as indispensable to a certain type of commercial sf hero as the ray-gun and space-suit were to an older generation. Silverberg's novel is an engaging tale about a sophisticated market analyst whose uncanny accuracy in predicting the future gains him a place on the campaign staff of a Presidential candidate. After the election he finds himself involved in the delusional world of an apparently paranoid figure who is the Oval Office necromancer, in fact a true clairvoyant whose deep melancholy is caused, understandably, by his ability to see in advance every event in his life, up to and including his own death. For all the predictable involvement of the two characters – though I'm not sure if my correct guess at the ending was a result of brilliant stochastic analysis or

TECHNOCRATS
v.
IDEOLOGUES

The New University Conflict

The modern university has, according to U.S. sociologist Alvin Gouldner, faced since 1968 a growing contradiction between two roles: as the producer of increasing numbers of technically-trained professionals, and as a major new forum of political and ideological debate.

The full implications of this situation are discussed by Professor Gouldner, widely-acclaimed author of *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*, in this week's THES:

"The ideologue is forced increasingly to retreat before the technocrat's pressure. This retreat seems in the longer run likely to concentrate ideologically rational, political discourse in a university-centred political sphere."

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merely humdrum clairvoyance – the two narrative strands coexist uneasily. But the novel is a fast and literate read, perhaps an early example of a new kind of sf whose chief interest will be its reflection of popular response, not to science and technology but to modish intellectualism: Chomsky and Levi-Strauss rather than rockets and laser beams.

Lasers play a key role in Christopher Hodder-Williams's *The Prayer Machine*, a novel so complex that I had to read it in one sitting for fear of losing my way in its labyrinthine plot and being unable to get out again. The hero, a schizophrenic scientist, forces his way into a mysterious research centre in the West Country, a curious mix of mental hospital and genetic engineering laboratory. Here he submits to a laser-powered form of ECT, and explodes through the roof of his own mind into a celestial black hole. Passing through this tunnel, he finds himself in a parallel universe, an exhausted post-technical Britain of deserts and poisoned air, ruled by a computerised terror regime that is dedicated to the extinction of the individual and the breeding of a new subservient citizenry. His efforts to escape are overlaid by his gradual awareness that the two versions of himself exist in opposing time streams, moving on a collision course towards an inevitable implosion and zero point. Are both the mirror universes a psychotic delusion? Is the black hole inside his head the only true reality? A maze of madness and metaphysics, tortuous enough to send you round the Mobius twist, *The Prayer Machine* is an exhausting but bracing puzzle.

By contrast, Christopher Priest's *The Space Machine* is an undemanding exercise in nostalgia. Curiously, pastiches of H. G. Wells tend to play down his matter-of-fact, no-nonsense style and cocoon his startling scientific fantasies inside the cosy mock-Victorianism of a Disney film, all frock coats and tasselled lampshades. Here, in the year 1893, a young commercial traveller and his ladyfriend meet an eminent scientist constructing a time machine. Pursuing their elaborate courtship in and around the device while the great man is absent, they accidently propel themselves by some warp of time and space to the Mars of *War of the Worlds*. After various adventures they return to a devastated England ten years ahead, where they witness the destruction of the Thames Valley and the death of the invading Martians in the company of a quiet little man called 'Mr Wells'. A pleasant tale, and full marks to the author for a highly original way of getting his stranded hero back to Earth, by hijacking one of the Martian flying machines and piloting it into Woking Common.

Universe 2, edited by Terry Carr, is one of the best of the anthologies that have increasingly taken the place of the sf magazines as a source of original short stories. Of the 13 stories here I particularly liked Harlan Ellison's 'On the Downhill Side', an outrageous piece of wide-screen baroque, and Joanna Russ's glossary for the wary interplanetary voyager, 'Useful Phrases for the Tourist'. These range from restaurant complaints – 'Waitress, this meal is still alive' – to party chat – 'I am happy to meet your clone' and 'Are you toxic?'

Julian Barnes

Nice and Nasty

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Spy by LEN DEIGHTON *Cape* £3.25
Something Nasty in the Woodshed by KYRIL BONFIGLIOLI *Macmillan* £2.95
Testkill by TED DEXTER and CLIFFORD MAKINS *Allen & Unwin* £2.95
Waiting for Sheila by JOHN BRAINE *Eyre Methuen* £3.25

Len Deighton gets so much mileage out of the tension between ill-assorted operatives working on the same job that it's almost a substitute for narrative. In the early novels it was smooth Old Harrovian roughing up bright self-made Harry Palmer. Lately, he's concentrated more on a Brit-Yank pairing: here, fearsomely efficient, arm-punching Major Mann is teamed with an uneasily admiring English narrator (still Palmer, one presumes). In fact, there's little enough excuse given for the latter's presence in this American-based yarn about a defecting Russian egghead who's mastered everything from pulsars to masers (posh lasers); but clearly Deighton feels happiest leading with a grizzling, wrangling duo, even one whose language is oddly undifferentiated. Mann's sarky, tough Yankee jibes are from much the same mould as Palmer's sarky, tough Cockney jibes. This style of chat is infectious – a German-born spy's moll suddenly hits out with feisty wisecracks – making dialogue at times as uni-toned as Racine.

Pace, though, is what Deighton is the master of, and *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Spy* shows all the familiar control. The lead-in is a routine pick-up of the defector in mid-Sahara, which goes smoothly except for an unlucky Arab getting snuffed; then a long, deceptive protection-and-debriefing section, packed with CIA info and burgeoning loyalties. Just when Deighton seems to be coasting, and you don't feel such a bubblebrain after all, in he jumps with a piece of smartly faked violence, the chase begins, and you zip round the world realising that the placid intro was not only full of hints but of hints which still have you foxed. Thereafter, the trail of murder, suicide, and hi-jacking is fast, probable, and very cleverly worked: the best spy story since . . . well, the last Deighton.

What, one sometimes wonders, lies beyond the down-beat anti-hero patented and still marketed by Deighton and Le Carré? Kyril Bonfiglioli's suggestion is a gleefully slobby creation called Charlie Mortdecai, who certainly outflanks him in anti-ness. Cowardly, cunning, sexually sluggish, lazy and even fat, his main enthusiasms are snobbery, gastronomy and self-preservation: identify with him if you dare is the constant implied challenge. His first appearance, in *Don't Point That Thing At Me*, revealed Mr Bonfiglioli as a writer capable of a rare mixture of wit and imaginative unpleasantness, for which he justly bagged a couple of awards. *Something Nasty* shows him pushing further in two directions: towards John Blackburn in his murky theme of an everyday Jersey Satanist whose rapes involve doing nasty things to the victims with toads; and towards Wodehouse (an openly acknowledged debt) in the camped-up style, upper-crustiness, and pacing of the humour. Despite going recklessly for jokes, Mr Bonfiglioli manages to keep us chilled with some authentically nasty incidents (there's a delightful ear-nailing episode).

With the West Indians over here, and the example of Dick Francis, it was obviously a good wheeze for Ted Dexter and Clifford Makins to think up *Testkill*. England v. Australia at Lords, our batsmen's pads thumping together with fright, when a demon Oz quickie pegs out at the popping crease. A cricket correspondent is autoed (he dies a-babbling of fast bowling), the President of the MCC filled in with a cricket bat, and Jack Stenton, Test cricketer turned hack, begins to suspect that it's one of the flannelled 21. With Ted Dexter's name up front I had initial hopes of the spilling of inside dirt: illegal sandpapering of the seam, lead in the batting gloves, that sort of thing. But there aren't, apparently, many on-field mysteries (cricket writers, indeed, are ticked off for over-imaginativeness); and the main discoveries concern Test groupies and the ease with which batsmen hole out off the pitch as well as on. Clues are dropped about as rarely as Australian slip catches, and Dexter-Makins often seem more intrigued by the clatter of falling boxes than with teasing us about the identity of the villain. Novelty, however, sustains the attention most of the way.

All of which leaves the straight novel this week, in the hands of John Braine (Bingley) Ltd, the company which turn out hand-crafted copies of ambitious work ing-class materialists. This year's model Jim Seathwaite, the general manager of departmental store, comes already equippe with authenticated success, a clip-on wife and a house on Sugar Hill, Surrey. Min you, if you undress him it still says 'Made i Lancashire' on the plastic; and, more im portant, you discover the appealing Woun inflicted when he found out that his mothe had been knocking off his uncle. This inte twining of sex and betrayal repeats itself i his own life; and a pained Jim spends mo of the novel waiting up for his errant wif slotting back the lagers and ruminatin There's an attractive precision about h childhood memories of Little Gent boo tags and Passing Clouds. But the Compar has never fudged on detail: 'I began wi places and worked up to people' ran recent description of the manufacturi process. The trouble is, the people work up to are incomparably shitty: selfish, d ceitful, materialistic, the sort who get a erection from watching *Sale of the Centu* They whine and rant about do-gooder modern hairstyles and the decline of t English language. It wouldn't be so bad one didn't suspect that the Company h become beguiled by its own product, a that the novel applauds rather than quer Jim's resounding hardhat philosophy:

> I want to keep what I've got, I want to k my position, I want to keep my status want to keep all my material possessio and I want more of everything if I can it.

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Television

Ian Hamilton

I'm an M.A.!

Mysteriously held over for a week, *Panorama*'s treatment of the William Tyndale school inquiry still managed to seem premature. The inquiry's report is not expected for another week or so, and by then it is likely that only the most impressionable viewers will have retained much in the way of guidance from this plodding 'reconstruction' of the pros and cons. And even they will probably recall only the more lurid oppositions. 'Should schools be open-plan, informal, the child learning when he wants to (picture of open-plan, informal infants tranquilly pursuing options)?' 'Or should they be like *this* (close-up of hectoring shrew demanding to know about nine-nines, five-fives and other structured nasties)?'

Michael Charlton really did introduce the programme in this way, and it was thus difficult for one to believe that *Panorama*'s dramatised extracts from the four-month-long Tyndale inquiry were not loaded just a little in favour of the open plan. Does Headmaster Ellis really have that reassuringly furrowed brow, that well-reined intensity of concern, those sentences containing verbs? No doubt he does, and for all I know his formalist adversary is just as jumpy (and as frumpy) as she was depicted here. But if all that happened at William Tyndale was that an idealistic young head had trouble in persuading slightly backward-looking but none the less reasonable colleagues to accept some sensible new methods, then what was all the fuss about? There was passing mention of the way in which Ellis's autonomous youngsters would sometimes choose the option of throwing stones at the infants in the school next door, or terrorising the dinner ladies, or even taking the occasional spit at one of their own teachers (some of whom exercised in turn the option of not turning up too early in the mornings). We also heard briefly of another interesting option:

> A sort of mothers and fathers game which went on in what used to be the library – the curtains were drawn and there were cushions, and the children resented any disturbance.

On the whole, though, intriguing pointers of this kind were glossed over as rival solemnities locked horns, and most parents watching these actors exchanging educational theories would not have felt too wary of their real-life models. And this, one can't help feeling, can't be right, since in real-life the Tyndale parents were more than just wary – so much so, that (in real life again) Headmaster Ellis was spurred to denounce the lot of them as 'working-class fascists or middle-class trendies'. Difficult to imagine that nice actor saying things like that.

In terms, then, of examining the specific case, or of exploring the opposed theories that the case so colourfully represents, the exercise was pretty pointless. Where it may have been illuminating, though, is in its underscoring of the extent and relative invulnerability of the headmaster's power. Once he's in, he's in, and for all the elaborate bureaucracy of managers, inspectors and committees that appears to overshadow him, he needs to dream up some fairly extreme indisciplines before he can be shifted. Again, perfectly all right in the case of that nice actor. But in real life . . . well, like teacher keeps telling us, there ought to be more options.

The obligation to real life is already weighing heavily on the makers of *Bill Brand* (Thames), now in its second week and breathing with great effort. The fledgling MP has made his first error of judgment and it's a big one: so big that he has found himself voting with the Scots Nationalists in defiance of a three-line Whip. *We* know that the error was caused by his supreme integrity (he had not wished to join the *Journal* group too hastily and had therefore not been told that they weren't, as threatened, going to vote against the Government), but the three ferociously lined Whips who haul him up for punishment don't care about that sort of thing. As far as they're concerned, he's through. And that's not all; marriage on rocks, mistress restive, working-class father felled by coronary, matronly Marxiste hanging about his new digs – little wonder that a certain monotony of posture and expression is beginning to afflict him. The effortfully calculated script must also be getting him down; the ingredients are all there – bit of politics, bit of home life, bit of what it's really like behind the scenes, bit of boyhood reminiscence about hard times, and so on – but stirred in with such a heavy hand. So far, the thing seems nowhere near as crisp and stylish as Arthur Hopcraft's *The Nearly Man* – but then that was about the kind of politician Bill is so gloweringly, and boringly, determined not to become.

Hard, then, to see him figuring in the vital tedium of committee work as celebrated by Granada's *State of the Nation*, which last Sunday tried to sort out what went wrong with the Land Commission. Difficult to do this without Richard Crossman; his diaries were to hand, but Dame Evelyn Sharp was there in person. Watching her in action, one could see why Crossman kept a diary, and also why his noted irritability was not entirely calmed by office. Her masterful use of the 'of course, of course' gambit must come pretty naturally after years of controlling her disdain for the transients she's had to work with, but none the less it was a joy to watch. The programme was supposed to be wondering if civil servants really run the show; with Dame Evelyn on view, the question seemed redundant.

Panorama's other item on Monday was about an Asian police sergeant (we learned in passing that a £25,000 recruitment drive aimed at coloured immigrants had attracted only eight recruits) and it was one of a number of Southall-animated brushes with the race issue. Dilip Hiro's *Centre Play* (BBC-2) was set in India and revolved around the job-application of an innocent ('I shall leave no stone unturned to prove my worth to the satisfaction of my superiors'). The applicant is pinned gawpingly between two friends; one a worldly sophisticate who's made it, and the other a fiery radical who thinks 'You die a little every time you write an application like this.' The play was full of lines like this, and when things got heated the author had only a comic shrillness to command: 'You're a fanatic!' 'I'm an M.A.!'

Still, there was something genuine and – perhaps unpleasantly – endearing in it all, and it provided an apt prelude to a discussion of immigrant newspapers on *The Editors* (BBC-1). Three Asians and one West Indian were supposed to give an account of what their papers did that 'white' papers didn't. Unfortunately, the three Asians' generally pacific, educative view got swamped by the West Indian's Black-Powerish indignations, and George Scott seemed undecided about whether to indulge the fellow or to quell him. Not an easy choice, since he was of studio-size girth. All in all, though, we were left in no doubt that the participants viewed the British Press's attitudes to immigrants with more than just suspicion. Remembering the day on which that 'four-star hotel' story was considered worthy of the front-page lead, I don't think we can blame them.

Films

Martin Amis

The Mild Bunch

The Last Hard Men *Carlton*
The Human Factor *Metropole, Victoria*
What's Up Tiger Lily? *Bloomsbury*

In genre films at least, the baddies have been the goodies for so long now that when successfully brutalised reviewers like myself say 'good' what we really mean is *bad*. A 'good' Western, for instance, will be a sorry affair, consisting entirely of gunplay and bloodshed; the especially 'good' bits in it will include unprovoked and motiveless torture (preferably at the expense of old, infirm or otherwise helpless persons), violent rape, consistently expressed hatred of all minorities, particularly ethnic ones, and, of course, any routine examples of mercilessness, foul-mouthed sadism and porcine greed. Schadenfreudian and facetious though these predilections may sound, I think they are connected with what is

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(cinematically) the most intriguing aspect of the Western world: the fact that strong people could, with feeble and erratic degrees of restraint, do whatever the hell they liked to weak people – the answer to the question 'why?' is always a happy-go-lucky 'why not?' How 'good' these bad things are depends exclusively on the wit, sensitivity and skill with which they are presented, moral considerations being even further out of bounds than usual.

The Last Hard Men, which is *quite* 'good', begins 'well', as halfbreed Zack Provo (James Coburn) and some cronies bust out of Yuma Prison in tolerably vicious style. Things go on poorly for a bit, with no gratuitous violence at all, until Provo's old enemy, Burgade (Charlton Heston), comes out of retirement and gets on Provo's trail. Unfortunately, too, by far the 'best' of the villains is self-righteously stabbed by Provo early on, merely for slitting an innocent bystander's throat and attempting to rape a pregnant Mexican. The heart sinks low at this point, naturally, but from here on things get 'better and better': Provo's gang kidnaps Burgade's pretty daughter (Barbara Hershey) and head for Dead Skin Rock in the Navajo hills, pursued by Burgade and Miss Hershey's greenhorn boy friend (Christopher Mitchum). There is a lot of delightful suspense concerning (i) how thoroughly Miss Hershey is going to be raped by Provo's rednecks, and (ii) how lingeringly Burgade is going to get creamed by the vengeful Provo, whose pregnant squaw Burgade accidentally shot nine years previously. Neither epiphany disappoints, except that Miss Hershey keeps her clothes on, Burgade is somehow meant to survive the frightful pasting meted out on him, and both scenes are shot in slow motion.

A larger difficulty is that *The Last Hard Men*, while pretty 'good', is not much *good*. Although the by-now familiar backgrounds are attentively and attractively observed, the lumbering foreground stars (Coburn and, even more so, Heston) seem to ride into town with clichés bulging out of their saddlebags. Coburn is such a sexy cut-throat that you *know* director Andrew V. McLaglen is going to have Miss Hershey fancying him at some point (she does too – how do you figure a woman?), and husky old Heston can still ride horses and shoot guns but is as hopeless as ever with the bold emotions demanded of him by the script. As so often, it is the smaller things that convince: in particular, the filthy, furtive minor villains – and Michael Parks's nervously offhand marshal – neatly delineate the tiny universe of fuddled and/or diseased paranoia which surely characterised this phase of the West's end. Otherwise, it's *The Mild Bunch*, I'm afraid.

The Human Factor – ponderously rendered as *The "Human" Factor* in the credits – has plenty of upliftingly X-certificate vengeance in it too. This time the blood-lust is held up as morally okay, even admirable, in its ferocity: a Naples-based Nato computer expert (played with impressive gloom by George Kennedy) returns home after a day with his spools and print-outs to find that his wife and kids have been the victims of an 'apparently senseless' mass murder – as opposed, presumably, to an obviously sensible one. A lot of the film is then devoted to the computer expert using his computer expertise (quite interesting all this, if mostly incomprehensible) to track down the mass murderers. As it happens, though – and this makes the computer stuff look even sillier – it is a fractured, disillusioned American high-up who casually provides the vital clue, and from here on Kennedy takes the law into his huge meaty hands. Low-brow highlights include a very sensitively done neck-breaking scene and a colossal shoot-out in a PX store.

Some ten years or so ago, whacky little Woody Allen had the kooky notion of buying up a bad Japanese thriller and zanily dubbing it with his own daffy dialogue. Woody's cute Manhattan alienations transform a crass thriller into a crass comedy-thriller – all about an emergent nation's bid to win recognition by capturing a unique recipe for egg salad! Although *What's Up Tiger Lily*? delighted the audience of eight or nine who saw it alongside me in the Bloomsbury last Friday afternoon, your reporter fell asleep half way through – and with such sprawling abandon that I had to be poked awake by the usherette's torch. 'Where's your ticket? Did you pay to get in?' she asked. 'Well, actually,' I said, 'I'm reviewing this, believe it or not.' I hoped she would chuck me out on my ear, but I was allowed to snooze peacefully to the end.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Ids and Ends

The Family Dance *Criterion*
Stone *ICA, lunchtime*
Liza of Lambeth *Shaftesbury*
Othello *Open Air*

The Family Dance is what the Musgraves are throwing offstage for their collective children. Redefined as an overheated, tarantella-like activity, in which toes get stomped on, groins booted and faces intermittently whacked, it's also what is happening onstage, at party headquarters, 'the kitchen of a large house in the country'. Ben (Alec McCowen) rages at everyone, notably his wife, who cannot so much as boil him a four-minute egg. She (Annette Crosbie) attempts suicide, provoking her bossy sister-in-law (Helen Lindsay) to all sorts of recrimination over her prone body – 'I knew Sophie was rather thoughtless, but this is the *limit*'. Meanwhile brother Toby (Michael Bryant) is drinking enough Scotch to get his customary horrors. At any rate, he yanks the hands off the kitchen clock with a cry of 'there, it's dead', and starts a lachrymose conversation with the family servants, who have themselves been dead for years. His wife (Judy Parfitt) is too absorbed with a visiting lounge-lizard (James Warwick) to care. 'Husband, children, I have no time for them,' she announces. 'They stand between me and the light, and Charles is the light' – and off the two of them trot, leering and canoodling, not five minutes after Ben has shaken and pounded Sophie back to life. It is clearly one of those evenings.

Indeed it is. I'm not altogether sure of the purpose of our author, Felicity Browne. Perhaps it is to show how sentimental ideals, such as expecting a family commune to flourish, are foredoomed by the egos and ids involved. Or perhaps this commune is particularly vulnerable because of its principal members' failure to grow up, their nostalgia for a cloudless childhood with nanny and cook. Perhaps we're watching the disintegration of an uppercrust world as well as the crisis of a clan. But whatever her ambitions, Miss Browne hasn't the discipline, economy or control to fulfil them. She has a sardonic, sometimes witty tongue and a gift for creating comic 'types': she also wishes us to take those types seriously, and even feel for them when, like McCowen's roaring Ben, they confess to a desperate need for affection or, like Miss Parfitt's lubricious Victoria, they start maundering on about 'entrails intertwined and writhing' or somesuch. But it takes great skill to blend parody and pathos, and Miss Browne has simply taken on more than she can yet manage, the common and by no means contemptible fault of the beginner. I would suggest she reads Giles Cooper's satire of domestic clubbishness, *Happy Family*, for its consistency of style and tone. I'd also advise her to find herself a pe critic, someone strong and schoolmasterly enough to make her re-do and re-do he homework, as *The Family Dance* shoulc have been re-done and re-done. As it stand (or, rather, sprawls), it is talented, bu amateurish.

Edward Bond is a moralist, and somethin of a preacher, so it's not surprising to fin him reviving an unfashionable form Bunyanesque allegory: he's also as interest ing a dramatist as we have, so his secula *Pilgrim's Progress* is more riveting an haunting than bald summary might sugges A young man, his pockets full of 'love 'honesty', 'justice' and so on, is hired t carry a small stone to some distant destina tion. A confrontation with a vicious tramj another with a mercenary whore, and mi after mile of exhausting trudge, leave h talents transformed into deadly sins and h stone grown into a crag, chained to h shoulders. He kills his employer, in wh Bond would seem to regard as an act c righteous rebellion against the society th has deceived his innocence, corrupted h virtues and burdened him with whatev we take the stone to mean – false goal Stale beliefs? Or, since the company involv is called Gay Sweatshop, perhaps al bigotry, other people's mindless hostility?

On the face of it, the trouble with *Sto* is the vagueness of a central metaph capable, so it seems, of meaning anythi and everything. But that may be precise Bond's intention. At any rate, his pr gramme note is about the indivisibility corruption, the interdependence of wror

> Anyone fighting against colonial freedc and emancipation of the working class v just as strongly fighting for the repress of homosexuals . . . Until more money a effort are spent on a good universal edu tion – without money-right to opt out i

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> privileged elites – then city roughs will go on queer-bashing sprees, and public schools will teach scorn and fear of homosexuality . . . Homosexual emancipation is not possible without economic and political reforms in other parts of society . . .

A small evil here sustains a larger one there. Accept a pebble and it will become a rock, an image and idea that set me in mind of another writer who was vividly sensitive to all varieties of oppression, all assaults on our pristine integrity. A dog starved at his master's gate predicts the ruin of the state: a boy weighed down with stone and chains may cause the nation many pains. I've long thought that Bond has a touch of William Blake about him: this short piece, in its admittedly cursory way, helps confirm my view.

Without Maugham's voice. *Liza of Lambeth* makes a drab tale: add the ingredients on offer at the Shaftesbury, and it becomes a drab musical. No point dwelling on this or on our latest *Othello*, which has Robert Stephens, potentially a fine Iago, as a Moor notably lacking in intensity, and Edward Fox (*the* Cassio?) as an uptight villain in mortal combat with wind, planes, distant shouts, and what sounded less like a frog than a distraught goose in his own throat. Neither the size nor the subtlety of Shakespearean tragedy can survive the encumbrances of Regent's Park.

Radio

Peter Porter

Talkies

Those loyal Radio Four listeners who *Start the Week with Esther Rantzen* and go on to *Stop (it) with Robert Robinson* get a pretty intense exposure to the BBC's cult of personality. As much as television, radio exploits egotism and quiddity in its broadcasters. Miss Rantzen, and Richard Baker, an alternative presenter of the morning chat show, rely upon their guests for endearing or infuriating moments: Robert Robinson provides his own fireworks. But one mustn't think that any of it is for keeps. Programmes of this sort specialise in creating an atmosphere of controversy or (and this is Miss Rantzen's speciality) a rather breathless break with the Ombudsman. If someone sounds as if he means what he's saying, music or the need to change the topic will come to the chairman's rescue. It's usual to try to give such symposia shape by choosing one particular topic, inviting the guests to illustrate it, and encouraging them to quarrel among themselves. Robert Robinson allows himself set pieces of facetiousness into which he drops genuine rebukes which sound entirely unjustified in the context. In one broadcast recently, he led off with a letter from a lady about the way people hold their knives and forks, and worked this up into a patronising soliloquy, which was the closest you can get today to a Twenties belletrist essay of the E. V. Lucas order. The talk was then turned to gambling, and Milton Shulman and a leading Methodist showed sympathy for each other's opposing views; after which the lost world of the debutantes and their coming-out parties was recalled by Ann Leslie and Angela Huth. Robinson stood in for the common man at this point. The Temperance Seven played from time to time. Forty-five minutes went past, and not a serious word was spoken.

Start the Week takes itself more lightly and if much of the conversation is trivial, at least it doesn't pretend to seriousness. However, it is burdened with Kenneth Robinson, whose heavy-handed send-up of an innocuous book on children's party games managed to produce real embarrassment in Esther Rantzen's voice the week before last. Both *Critics' Forum* (Radio Three) and *A Word in Edgeways* (Radio Four) are free of this awful facetiousness. The influence of television on radio has been almost entirely bad, and it occurs to me that the *Start* and *Stop* shows are really television in sound. Good conversation is the very breath of radio, but famous personalities and brilliant talkers are not necessarily the people to provide it.

A repeat of Edward Albee's *Listening* (Radio Three) gives me the chance to comment on one of the most distinguished pieces of broadcasting for many a day. It is less a play than a sonata in words. One man and two women are in the gardens of a rest home or mental hospital. Their relationship emerges dynamically and thematically: the conversation is almost barred like a musical score, and from time to time a voice speaks the number of the next section of the script and the topic changes. It is obsessional and proceeds as much by enharmonic changes as by plotting. One word will suggest another and when phrases recur they bring with them memories of different contexts. But the verbal play is much richer than in Beckett's similar forays. Albee remains a dramatist and the violence which swims up in the words (most particularly a chilling litany of sexual humiliation) gets home to the listener with absolute force. Much of my comment might suggest another fashionable work of non-communication, more news from nowhere. But Albee's voices are American, and the development of his language and the lineaments of pain and hostility which lie behind his words are much fresher than our lyrically exhausted European equivalents. John Tydeman and the author produced it in New York. Irene Worth, James Ray and Maureen Anderman were all excellent.

Awake and Sleep (Radio Three) by Peter Russell could not have been more unlike Albee's play, but it was enjoyable in its own way. It was a rather gamey sex comedy, with a suburban family worried that their son might be homosexual and trying to wean him away from such tastes by the usual method of fixing up girls for him. That the boy should be secretly a whisky-drinker and sexually experienced was only to be expected. But Mr Russell's dialogue was often very funny and the clichéd situations were nearly always turned in on themselves. I especially enjoyed the worried mother's remark on being told the entrail-dragging plot of some Bond-or-Rudkin-like play which her son and his girl friend had just seen on a night out. 'When I was a girl, they did that sort of play in verse', she said. David Thompson's *The Best Loved English Painter* (Radio Four) told John Constable's story directly, and intelligently. When good actors speak well-conceived words, the subject of their talk comes to mind with indelible sharpness.

Ballet

Oleg Kerensky

Sleepers Awake

The Stuttgart Ballet *Coliseum*
The Royal Ballet *Sadler's Wells*
Nureyev Festival *Coliseum*

The Stuttgart Ballet was here for only two weeks, but its visit overshadowed what has happened since. It wasn't so much the new choreography which impressed this time as the exuberance and quality of the dancing. Cranko's *Opus 1*, not seen here before, turned out to be a very effective semi-abstract work, well fitted to Webern's passacaglia. But Glen Tetley's well-nigh incomprehensible *Daphnis and Chloë* was memorable only for the dancing – Marcia Haydée touchingly desolate as Chloë when she finds Daphnis flirting with Lykanion, Cragun boundingly athletic as Daphnis, and Egon Madsen a puckish Pan, throwing off convoluted jumps and spins. The corps de ballet danced with speed and vigour too. Indeed the dancing was almost persuasive enough to make one overlook its singular unsuitability to Ravel's languid music.

DUTCH CINEMA AT THE NFT
JUNE 21-27

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Madsen was the undoubted super-star of the season; his romantic Romeo was if anything even more winning than his brilliant Mercutio. Carl Morrow, a young Australian, replaced him more than adequately in the difficult fast section of *Initials*, when Madsen suffered an injury, and Vladimir Klos, Jonas Kage and Reid Anderson were all fully acceptable alternates for Cragun and Madsen in the leading male roles of *Romeo and Juliet*. The most striking thing about the very international Stuttgart Ballet was the high level of male dancing, but Birgit Keil, Joyce Cuoco and especially young Lucia Isenring were all attractive and touching Juliets.

Technical virtuosity and strong projection of personality were what we missed when the Royal Ballet's touring section opened at the Wells and Festival Ballet succeeded Stuttgart at the Coliseum. Maina Gielgud and Stephen Jefferies saved the Royal's otherwise dreary first night with their powerful performances in *Checkmate*. Jefferies, the most interesting and dramatic young male dancer in British ballet, is being lost to the National Ballet of Canda, for a year or two at least. It is sad that an injury, probably brought on by overwork, kept him out of most of his farewell London season. Apart from Margaret Barbieri's lovely Bride, *La Fête Etrange* was dull and ineffective while Christopher Bruce's *Unfamiliar Playground*, though it starts quite promisingly, now strikes almost everyone as a repetitive bore. In the Royal's second programme, Alain Dubreuil, who is also leaving at the end of the season, danced everything. Visibly saving himself as Oberon in *The Dream* and wasting his energy in David Morse's *Pandora*, he was a fine Joker in *Card Game*, though without the sadistic streak which Jefferies brings to it.

The only new ballet of the season, Jack Carter's *Lulu*, was obviously meant to be a popular hit – jolly, familiar music by Milhaud from *Le Boeuf sur Le Toit*, a story which starts as circus, includes lesbianism and ends as grand guignol, Jefferies cracking a whip as the ring-master and then becoming a suitably sinister Jack the Ripper, and Merle Park showing her legs provocatively and quick-changing innumerable costumes. There are some good farcical moments, but there is no real characterisation and the choreography is uninventive and uninteresting.

The Gala opening of Nureyev's spectacular and theatrical *Sleeping Beauty* was a little sad. It began very late, which made a dispiriting start, and Nureyev himself was clearly tired and strained, though he made a superhuman effort and achieved some remarkable and dangerous-looking physical feats. By the following week he was much more relaxed, and dancing superbly. Karen Kain, replacing an indisposed Evdokimova at short notice, was too hale and hearty as Aurora, and too tall and big for Nureyev. Her Rose Adagio was surprisingly insecure, but she improved in the vision scene and did a good final pas de deux. Nicholas Johnson was a stylish but strangely unexciting Bluebird. The rest of the cast, especially the long roster of female soloists, were technically competent but dull, mostly lacking any sort of allure or classical style. At later performances, Patricia Ruanne was a charming Aurora, acting well and doing impeccable balances in the Rose Adagio, and Johnson looked suitably romantic and coped with the difficulties of the Prince's role, although his dancing seems to have lost a lot of its old elan. Paul Clarke was handsome and jumped well in the divertissement. Frank Augustyn, like Kain a guest from Canada, was a brilliant virtuoso Bluebird. When Evdokimova eventually appeared she brought Aurora extra panache and virtuosity without the precise musicality or compelling presence of a great ballerina.

I wish Nureyev could have injected the rest of the cast with more of his own inexhaustible energy and enthusiasm. He will certainly need them himself, as he is to dance every night for seven weeks, making his first London appearance in several difficult modern roles and in the Danish classic, *La Sylphide*.

Weekend Competition

No 2417 **Set by P. W. R. Foot**

Mrs Thatcher has referred to the adventures of 'Denis in Wonderland'. Competitors are asked to provide extracts from a book of this title, or from fairy stories featuring other public figures, such as 'Nixon in Never Never Land' or 'Harold in Erewhon'. 120 word or so by 2 July.

Result of No 2414 **Set by Spiro Keats**

Competitors were asked to provide examples of the poetry of World War III; they were asked, in addition, to go easy on the Bomb, poetic cataclysms being generally rather vulgar and tiresome.

Report **by Spiro Keats**

You should have heard all the bleeding-hearts and jelly-knees beefing about my strictures on Bomb poetry. Actually, it *was* hard to avoid it, and I decided to be as good-natured and flexible as ever. A large and able entry, with lots of new and promising faces. Honourable mentions to A. M. Sayers, J. W. Smeed, Gordon Bentley and Anne Castledine. £6 each to the winners.

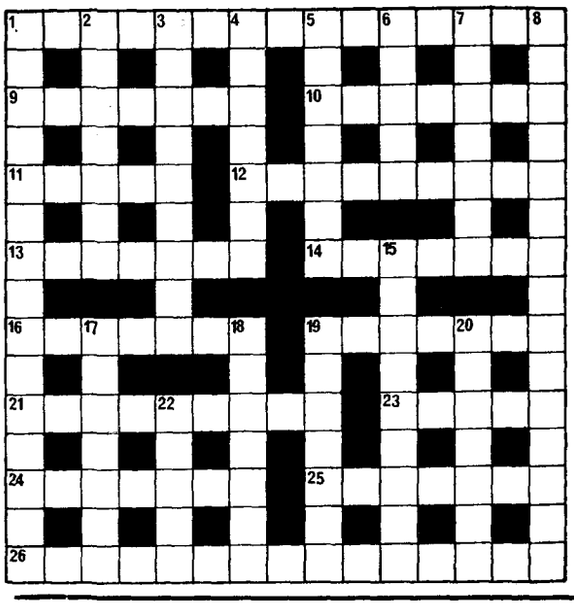
Once it was muddy blood in fields of Flanders
or the hurtling few dying over a
wondering Weald
seeking to save a world fit for heroes to rot in
Now the sterile computer room
the holocaust is fought out in dials
and oscilloscopes
Was that button that Sergeant Sharor
Smithson pushed
the signal for a million Chinese deaths
or a request for simulated soya soup?
Both will be horrible
in different ways, naturally,
But we have no illusions about aftermaths:
Those who save the world never share it.

HARRISON EVERARD

My Chinese rifle in my hand
I shot the black man through the head

Weekend Crossword 1169

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1169, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 29 June.



ACROSS

1. Revelations I can make about what young men sometimes have to do (8,7).
9. 'And there were——bright with sinuous rills' (Coleridge) (7).
10. The trouble with boxing is that it is full of love (7).
11. Place in the room a handsome fellow occupies (5).
12. Repetition gives one proportion in number (9).
13. Garment which shows it back to front in the glass (7).
14. Messes about like a Shavian doctor in the valleys (7).
16. The mineral would be genuine if there were no stone put back (7).
19. Road not out of order although there is a violent storm (7).
21. Do something with blood which may give safe turns (9).
23. Garment for Ronaldson? (5).
24. Helped when adult is involved with a devil (7).
25. Paul wanders round the border for a flower (7).
26. Have a happy ending in Italy? (3,6,3,3).

DOWN

1. Songs of pure origins last seen in a different rendering (5,10).
2. Land which is three times superior to water (7).
3. Daunting about part of a chicken (9).
4. One of these cars would confine us in space fit for sardines (7).
5. Dread in children for something on the shore (7).
6. Girl who is an artist without a tool (5).
7. The tail in one transformed into the beginning (7).
8. Athletic contest for people who give encouragement and make love? (3, 3, 5, 4).
15. With one change the West Indian could become an uncivilised man (9).
17. Something on the stove on time to give provision for maintenance (7).
18. Lend our turning circle (7).
19. The second page is for the dramatist (7).
20. Unable to move but enough to make a dog run (7).
22. In general everyone turn up with us (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1167

J	A	C	K	D	A	W		C	A	R	C	A	S	E
U		O		R		E		R		E		U		S
M	A	R	M	A	L	A	D	E		S	O	C	K	S
P		G		M		T		W		T		T		E
E	P	I	T	A	P	H	S		A	R	R	I	A	N
R				S		E		F		A		O		C
S	A	P	S		B	R	I	L	L	I	A	N	C	E
		R		H		M		A		N		E		
D	A	I	R	Y	F	A	R	M	S		O	D	E	S
I		N		A		N		B		B				C
A	L	C	O	C	K		B	O	R	O	D	I	N	C
G		E		I		I		Y		T		N		U
R	O	D	I	N		S	T	A	V	A	N	G	E	R
A		O		T		I		N		N		O		E
M	E	M	P	H	I	S		T	R	Y	S	T	E	R

Prizewinners to No 1167

Mrs Helen Hart (Ipswich)
F. Marzillier (Chobham)
A. M. Oliver (Kendal)

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That's one less bastard in our land
Another Civil servant dead

We held them at the Watford Gap
Those Red Flag chanting Commie Scum
Yes – you can push the average chap
So far – and then you've had it chum

We fling your handouts in your face
Your 'Parliament', your Social Plans
You've brought our country to disgrace
Let's die before the Russians land

DOUGLAS GRANT

'Lay off the Bomb,' they said, 'it lacks precision,
Knowing no frontiers.
Let us perfect a cool and kindly death;
The living win, however the dead die.'

Who would have thought these subtler weapons
Were so compassionate?
There was no pain, no sharp cry in the night,
When those I cherish vanished from my side.

Who would have thought this surreptitious death
Could bring such agony?
The void kills, loneliness is extinction;
Survivors lose, however the dead die.

AL PETERS

This perspex model is what you might call a
perfect replica
Except of course for the perspex, of a
typical shelter,
If such a thing as typical exists. The first thing
to notice
Is the door, and this long thing is the
radiation reflector,
Which in your case you have not got. This
little room here
Is the same as the little room in every house
and under it
Is the water recycling device, which again you
have not got.
I see some of you are looking alarmed and a
lady in the back
Has fainted but there is no need to panic
because this is
Only a model and I assure you that in the
real thing
That little room I showed you is not made
of perspex.

JOHN LLOYD WILLIAMS

Assiac

Chess Board

No 1386 **The Golden Dozen**

The title of a beautifully produced book (at OUP for £5.95) by Irving *Chernev* who with his *penchant* for superlatives subtitles it 'The 12 greatest chess players of all time'. Well, who would quarrel with a selection of Nimzowitsch, Rubinstein, Bronstein, Spassky, Smyslov, Tal, Petrosian, Botvinnik, Fischer, Lasker, Alekhine, Capablanca? One could, of course, admonish: what about Larsen, Portisch, Karpov among the younger ones, what about Tarrasch among the elders? But then 'The Golden Fifteen' wouldn't be much of a title. (Even so, what about contemporary Korchnoi and old Steinitz.)

The book is not only very pretty to look at, it is also well indexed, documented and illustrated, and to have 115 well selected gems should please every customer. If only dear old Irving didn't feel obliged to grade his golden dozen. He puts Capa, Alekhine, Lasker, Fischer (in this order) on top and asserts: 'I consider Rubinstein the eleventh greatest chess player of all time' (with Nimzo No 12 and Bronstein No 10). Myself, I happen to be fond of Camembert, Brie, Stilton and Gervais, but I would never dare to grade them. The author's notes and comments are mostly but not always helpful. For Lasker's celebrated win over Capa at St. Petersburg 1914 Chernev proudly lists as many as 13 sources consulted, and after explaining that Lasker *had* to play for a win to have a chance of winning the tournament he adds that he chose the exchange variation of the Ruy because of previous successes. This completely misses the real point, and Lasker was rightly proud of the psychological finesse behind it. He chose the exchange variation because it saddles Black with the inferior P-skeleton for the ending and the pair of Bishops clamouring for attack; but then that was the last thing Capa wanted in the circumstances. All he wanted was a safe draw, so when his wily opponent dragged him into a situation psychologically repugnant he went to pieces.

Even so the book can't help being attractive, and since picking one example means a most formidable *embarras de richesse* – nay *embarras de gloire* I might as well think of my scanty space and pick the celebrated quickie, Spassky (Black) slaying Larsen in the famous 1970 match USSR v. Rest of the World.

1) b3,e5; 2) Bb2,Ktc6; 3) c4,Ktf6; 4) Ktf3 Fearlessly asking for trouble, **e4; 5) Ktd4,Bc5; 6) Ktc6:,dc:; 7) e3,Bf5** Squinting at White's weak d3; **8) Qc2,Qe7; 9) Be2,0-0-0; 10) f4?,Ktg4!** With a multitude of threats; **11) g3,h5!; 12) h3** Obviously Ktc3 ruled out by . . . Rd2:, **h4!; 13) hg:** Larsen spent an hour on this move, **hg: 14) Rg1,** and how Spassky smashed his way to victory in a few moves is A, the 4-pointer for beginners.

For 6 ladder-points **B** is a witty draw-study resolved in a mere three moves. Note that the don'ts are as subtle as the do's. **C** (for 7) is a win in 9 moves. Usual prizes, entries by 28 June.

B: Selesniev: /r7/P1R3pk/8/6Pp/7K/p7/16/.
C: E. Holm: /8/1r6/1P3P1k/p5p1/7Kt/B7/Kp6/8/.

Report on No 1381 *Set 7 May*

A: Qh7:†!! & Rh3† & Kte7:††.
B: 1) Bf7,Rb7; 2) Bc3,Rc7; 3) Bd4,Rd7; 4) Be5!, Re7; 5) Ba1!, etc.
C: 1) g6,Kg5; 2) g7,f2†; 3) Ke2,Kh6; 4) g8=Q, f1=Q†; 5) Kf1:,g2†; 6) Ke2!,g1=Q; 7) Qh7†!, etc. **Or . . . g2; 2) Kf2,Kg5; 3) g7,Kh6; 4) g8=Q,g1=Q†; 5) Kg1:,f2†; 6) Kh2!,f1=Q; 7) Qh7†** and wins by 8) Kte4† & Qg6†, etc.

Too easy may be and quite a few flawless entries. Prizes: R. C. Chaturvedi, D. E. Cohen, J. P. Ford, E. W. Jarrah, J. B. Thould (aged 13).

Report on No 1382 *Set 14 May*

A: 1) . . . h6?? (. . . Qa3:! would have won); **2) Qh6:†!!,Kh6:; 3) g5†,** and stalemate.
B: 1) Re3†,Kd5; 2) Rf6! (Rf7? refuted by . . . Kd6! =+), **Ktg8; 3) Rf5** wins Or . . . **Kd4; 2) Rf7!** winning while Rf8? refuted by Ktd5! and draw.
C: 1) Kf2,Bh1; 2) Kg1,Bf3; 3) Ktg5†,Ke3; 4) Ba7†,Ke2; 5) Kte6,Bh6 (e7,d6,b4,a3); 6) Ktd4†,Ke3; 7) Ktf5† or **c2†** respectively.

Prizes: I. R. Bradley, M. I. Furmston, P. Hodgson, J. Kelly (all the way from Mauritius) J. D. Taylor.

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and

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NEW STATESMAN
Vol. 91 No. 2361

Contents

800 **James Fenton:** Spotlight on Politics
801 **Chris Mullin:** Report from Rhodesia
802 **Peter Mansfield:** Putting Lebanon Together Again
803 **Alexander Cockburn:** Sexual Congress
804 **Peter Walker:** An Open Letter to the Prime Minister
805 **Christopher Hitchens:** Rotherham to the Rescue
806 **Mervyn Jones:** Italy: Il Momento è Grave
810 **Corinna Adam:** The Archbishop's Non-Revival
811 **Crucifer:** London Diary
812 **Anne Bennett:** Never the Twain Shall Meet
812 **Roger Woddis:** Kipling Revisited
813 **Arthur Marshall:** First Person
814 **Letters to the Editor**

Books & Arts
816 **Philip French:** Chandler
820 **John Mortimer:** Anna

Other reviews by **David Caute, Richard Shone, Paul Addison, Malcolm Bradbury, J. G. Ballard, Julian Barnes**
823 **Ian Hamilton:** Television
823 **Martin Amis:** Films
824 **Benedict Nightingale:** Theatre
825 **Peter Porter:** Radio
825 **Oleg Kerensky:** Ballet
826 **Weekend Competition and Crossword**
827 **Chess**
Poem by Tom Paulin

Theatres

CHICHESTER. 0243 86333 18, 19, 21 & 23 June at 7.0, 24 June at 2.0 'Twelfth Night' 19 June at 2.0, 22, 24 & 25 June at 7.0 'Noah.'

EMBASSY THEATRE, Swiss Cottage. Central School of Speech and Drama: 'Little Me', a musical, book by Neil Simon. Performing on 17, 19, 21, 22 and 23 June at 7.30 p.m. Box office open Mon.Fri. 2 p.m.-6 p.m. 722 8186.

EMBASSY STUDIO Swiss Cottage. (opp. Embassy Theatre). Central School of Speech and Drama: 'Oedipus Rex', by Sophocles and 'Playing With Fire', by August Strindberg. Adm. Free. Further details from Embassy Theatre Box Office. Tel. 01-722 8186. Open Mon.-Fri. 2 p.m.-6 p.m.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE. 722 9301. Until Sat. 19 June, Ev, 8, Sat. 5 & 8 p.m. Molière's 'Dom Juan', Sun. 20 June, 8 p.m. 1 night only, reading of new Charles Wood comedy. 'The Script', with Robin Bailey & Warren Mitchell. All tickets 50p.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE CLUB. 722 9301. Unity Theatre's prof. company in 'Occupations' by Trevor Griffiths. Dir. by Declam Mulholland. Mon. 21 to 26 June at 7.45 p.m. Adm. £1.0. Students, OAPs 60p.

ROYAL COURT. 730 1745. Last perfs, Fri. at 8, Sat. 5 & 8.30, 'Play and Other Plays', ('Play', 'That Time', & 'Footfalls.') Mon.-Fri. at 8, Sat. 5 & 8.30, 'Endgame.'

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LYTTELTON (New National Theatre) 928 2252 Fri. & Tues. at 7.45, Sat. & Wed. at 2.30 & 7.45, Thurs. at 7, 'Blithe Spirit,' by Noël Coward. Mon. at 7.45, 'Plunder.' Over 100 excel. seats on sale day of perf.

POLESDEN LACEY OPEN AIR, Great Bookham, Surrey. 'Twelfth Night' 30 June 1, 2 July 7.30 p.m. Sat. 3 July 3 & 7.30 p.m. 'Antony & Cleopatra' 7, 8, 9 July 7.30 p.m. Sat. 10 July 3 & 7.30 p.m. Tickets £1.30, £1 and 75p. Bookham 52241 10 a.m.-7 p.m. (Sat 1 p.m.).

SUGAWN THEATRE, Duke of Wellington, Balls Pond Rd, N1. 254 1458. Presenting 'In Celebration of Finnegans Wake', devised and directed by John Quinn. Perfs: 17, 21, 22, 23, 24 June, 8 p.m. 50p adm.

THEATRE ROYAL, WINDSOR. 95 61107. 'Cowardy Custard', an entertainment featuring the words and music of Noël Coward.

VANBRUGH THEATRE CLUB. To 19 June Shakespeare: 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. 24-26 June Chekov: 'Three Sisters'. Details RADA, 62 Gower St, London WC1, 636 7076.

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Exhibitions

GANYMED GALLERY, 11 Gt Turnstile, WC1. 405 9836. Lithographs & etchings by Henry Moore and 19C caricatures Heath, Gillray, Cruikshank, Woodward etc.

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Poetry

SHAUN TRAYNOR, Sebastian Barker and Sylvia Mann. Sun. 20 June at 7.45. The Wine Bar, King's Arms Pub, Sloane Sq., SW1. Adm. 50p. Students 30p. OAPs 20p. Inqs: 730 1885, Organiser. LPS assisted.

Meetings

BRITAIN AND IMMIGRATION. A series of lectures, films and discussions arranged by the Runnymede Trust at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, The Mall, SW1. Tuesday 22 June 7 p.m. 'Futurology: Blacks and other minorities in an evolving Britain.' Introduction by Sylvia Denman, Lecturer in Law at Oxford University, with a panel invited from various ethnic minorities. Chairman — Professor Bernard Crick. Admission: 50p public; 35p ICA members and students.

THE COMING WORLD TEACHER and the Masters of the Ageless Wisdom, from the esoteric Teachings of Alice A. Bailey for The New Age. Talks by Benjamin Creme, Friends' House, Euston Rd, NW1, Thurs. 17, Tues. 22 & 29 June 7 p.m. Free.

RALF DAHRENDORF will deliver the Fifth Chorley Lecture on 'A Confusion of Powers; Politics by Jurisdiction and the Partisan Administration of Law' in the Founders' Room at the London School of Economics, Houghton St, WC2 on Wednesday, 23 June at 5.30 p.m. Admission Free without Ticket.

WORLD DEVELOPMENT MOVEMENT/Focus Group Conference: 'After UNCTAD What Now?' Sat. 19 June at Royal Commonwealth Society, 18 Northumberland Ave, WC2. Chairman: Lord Caradon, Speakers: Gamani Corea, Jan Pronk, Lord Briginshaw, Richard O'Brien. Fee £2. 01-930 6733 ext 2.

UNCTAD IV. Talk by Rt Hon. Judith Hart MP. Wed. 23 June 6.30 p.m. Adm. 40p, Stud. 25p. *Africa Centre,* 38 King Street, WC2. 836 1973.

MOSHE YOTVAT, Director of the Aliyah Dept, Jewish Agency, will discuss Western Immigration to Israel, on Sun. 20 June 8 p.m. at Young Mapam, 37 Broadhurst Gardens, NW6.

PRACTICAL TIBETAN BUDDHISM: Tues. 22 June 7 p.m. Talks and informal discussions on all aspects of Tibetan Buddhist Practice. All welcome. The Tibet Society of the UK 46 Belgrave Square, London SW1. 01-235 3720. Full programme details, facilities on request.

CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY. Tony Stoller, a broadcasting administrator, on 'Controlling the Power of the Media' 7.30 p.m. 23 June. 5 Tavistock Place, WC1. Collection — all welcome.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE, 54 Holland Pk, W11. Sun. 20 June 5 p.m. Swami Bhavyananda on 'The Katha Upanishad'. Wed. meeting at 6.45 p.m. All welc. Vedanta magazine 40p.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 58 Eccleston Square, London SW1. Sat. 19 June 3 p.m. 'Open Day'. Tues. 22 June 6.30 p.m. 'Introducing Buddhism'. Wed. 23 June 6.30 p.m. Public Lecture: 'The Three Signs of Being are the Heart of Buddhism': Christmas Humphreys All welcome. Send s.a.e. for full programme.

THEOSOPHY. Public Talk & Questions. Sun. 20 June 8 p.m. Free. 'Theosophy as Self-education'. S.a.e. for prog., book list & literature. ULT. 62 Queen's Gdns. W2.

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8.30 p.m. BRITANNIA BRIGHT'S BEWILDERMENT IN THE WILDERNESS OF WESTMINSTER narrated by **Clive James** and **Russell Davies.**
WEDNESDAY 30 JUNE
6.15 p.m. HEBREW POETRY: a survey by the distinguished Israeli poet **T. Carmi,** with readings by **Charles Osborne**
8.30 p.m. THE COMIC MUSE: a programme of light verse presented by **Kingsley Amis** and read by **Prunella Scales** and **Alan Bennett.**
THURSDAY 1 JULY
6.15 p.m. ROOMS, STREETS, LANDSCAPES: **Charles Tomlinson** presents a choice of modern French poetry, with readings by **Michel Couturier.**
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